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BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS.

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A Treatise

ON THE

INTERPRETATION

OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

BY

MILTON S. TERRY, S.T.D.,

PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT EXEGESIS IN GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

NEW EDITION, THOROUGHLY REVISED.

NEW YORK: HUNT & EATON
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PREFACE.

THE first edition of this work was published in the autumn of 1883, and has received such cordial and continued welcome as to put beyond doubt that a treatise of its character is needed in our English theological literature. The general plan of the volume has been adapted to meet what appear to be the practical wants of most theological students. Specialists and experts in exegetical learning will push their way through all difficulties, and find delight in testing principles; but the ordinary student, if led at all into continued and successful searching of the Scriptures, must become interested in the practical work of exposition. The bare enunciation of principles, with brief references to texts in which they are exemplified, is too dry and taxing to the mind to develop a taste for exegetical study; it has a tendency rather to repel. Our plan is rather to familiarize the student with correct methods by means of continuous exercise in the actual work of exegesis. The statement of principles is introduced gradually, and abundantly illustrated and verified by a faithful application of them to such portions of the Holy Scriptures as are known to have peculiar difficulties, or to be of special interest and value. It is not expected that all our interpretations will command unqualified approval, but it is confidently believed that a selection of the more difficult Scriptures for examples of exposition will enhance the real value of the work, and save it from the danger, too often common in such treatises, of running into lifeless platitudes. With ample illustrations of this kind before him, the student comes by a natural inductive process to grasp hermeneutical principles, and learns by example and practice rather than by abstract precept.

The larger portion of the volume is devoted to Special Hermeneutics. This fact will, we believe, meet the approval of all biblical scholars. They will acknowledge the propriety of passing more rapidly over those general principles, on which there exists little or

no difference of opinion, and of allowing greater space for the treatment of parables, allegories, types, symbols, and apocalyptic prophecy. The necessity of sound principles is most deeply felt in the study of these enigmatical portions of the Bible. Our constant aim has been to abstain from all appearance of dogmatism, and to adhere strictly to the method of scientific and conscientious inquiry. If Special Hermeneutics serves any useful end, it must cultivate the habit of searching for what the Scripture has to say for itself, not of imposing upon its language the burden of whatever it is able to bear.

Considerable space has been given to the subject of prophetic symbolism. The apocalyptic books have ever been regarded as most difficult to explain, but not a few of the difficulties have grown out of the extravagant notion that we may expect to find in prophecy a detailed history of events from the advent of Christ to the end of time. We have tried to show that the biblical symbols and apocalypses are largely self-interpreting, and, if allowed to speak for themselves, are not more difficult of exposition than the parables of Jesus.

Profoundly grateful for the generous commendation of the former editions, and profiting by the friendly criticism of numerous reviews, the author has spared no pains to make this new edition more worthy of general favour. The revision has extended to nearly every page, and considerable portions have been rewritten. A number of chapters, not strictly belonging to Hermeneutics, have been omitted, and others have been condensed, so that the substance of the original work of 782 pages now appears in a more convenient, and, we trust, not less valuable, volume.

EVANSTON, *May* 15, 1890.

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INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

HERMENEUTICS is the science of interpretation. The word is usually applied to the explanation of written documents, and may therefore be more specifically defined as the science of interpreting an author's language.[1] This science assumes that there are divers modes of thought and ambiguities of expression among men, and, accordingly, it aims to remove the supposable differences between a writer and his readers, so that the meaning of the one may be truly and accurately apprehended by the others.

Hermeneutics defined.

It is common to distinguish between General and Special Hermeneutics. General Hermeneutics is devoted to the general principles which are applicable to the interpretation of all languages and writing. It may appropriately take cognizance of the logical operations of the human mind, and the philosophy of human speech. Special Hermeneutics is devoted rather to the explanation of particular books and classes of writings. Thus, historical, poetical, philosophical, and prophetical writings differ from each other in numerous particulars, and each class requires for its proper exposition the application of principles and methods adapted to its own peculiar character and style. Special Hermeneutics, according to Cellérier, is a science practical and almost empirical, and searches after rules and solutions; while General Hermeneutics is methodical and philosophical, and searches for principles and methods.[2]

General and Special Hermeneutics.

[1] The word *hermeneutics* is of Greek origin, from *ἑρμηνεύω*, to *interpret*, to *explain*; thence the adjective *ἡ ἑρμηνευτικὴ* (sc. *τέχνη*), that is, the *hermeneutical art*, and thence our word *hermeneutics*, the science or art of interpretation. Closely kindred is also the name Ἑρμῆς, Hermes, or Mercury, who, bearing a golden rod of magic power, figures in Grecian mythology as the messenger of the gods, the tutelary deity of speech, of writing, of arts and sciences, and of all skill and accomplishments.

[2] Manuel d'Herméneutique Biblique, p. 5. Geneva, 1852.

Biblical or Sacred Hermeneutics.

Biblical or Sacred Hermeneutics is the science of interpreting the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. According to the order of books in the Christian Canon, we have, first, the five Books of Moses, commonly called the Pentateuch; next follow twelve Historical Books, recording the history of the Israelites from the death of Moses to the restoration from Babylonian exile, and covering a period of a thousand years. Then follow five Poetical Books—a drama, a psalter, two books of proverbial philosophy, and a song of love; and after these are seventeen Prophetical Books, among which are some of the most magnificent monuments of all literature. In the New Testament we have, first, the four Gospels, a record of the life and words of Jesus Christ; then the Acts of the Apostles, a history of the beginning of the Christian Church; then the thirteen Pauline Epistles, followed by the Epistle to the Hebrews and the seven General Epistles; and, finally, the Apocalypse of John.

Old and New Test. Hermeneutics should not be separated.

Inasmuch as these two Testaments differ in form, language, and historical conditions, many writers have deemed it preferable to treat the hermeneutics of each Testament separately. And as the New Testament is the later and fuller revelation, its interpretation has received the fuller and more frequent attention. But it may be questioned whether such a separate treatment of the Old and New Testaments is the better course. It is of the first importance to observe that, from a Christian point of view, the Old Testament cannot be fully apprehended without the help of the New. The mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known unto men, was revealed unto the apostles and prophets of the New Testament (Eph. iii, 5), and that revelation sheds a flood of light upon numerous portions of the Hebrew Scriptures. On the other hand, it is equally true that a scientific interpretation of the New Testament is impossible without a thorough knowledge of the older Scriptures. The very language of the New Testament, though belonging to another family of human tongues, is notably Hebraic. The style, diction, and spirit of many parts of the Greek Testament cannot be properly appreciated without acquaintance with the style and spirit of the Hebrew prophets. The Old Testament also abounds in testimony of the Christ (Luke xxiv, 27, 44; John v, 39; Acts x, 43), the illustration and fulfillment of which can be seen only in the light of the Christian revelation. In short, the whole Bible is a divinely constructed unity, and there is danger that, in studying one part to the comparative neglect of the other, we may fall into one-sided and erroneous methods of exposition. The Holy Scrip-

tures should be studied as a whole, for their several parts were given in manifold portions and modes (πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως, Heb. i, 1), and, taken all together, they constitute a remarkably self-interpreting volume.

Biblical Hermeneutics, having a specific field of its own, should be carefully distinguished from other branches of theological science with which it is often and quite naturally associated. It is to be distinguished from Biblical Introduction, Textual Criticism, and Exegesis. Biblical Introduction, or Isagogics, is devoted to the historico-critical examination of the different books of the Bible. It inquires after their age, authorship, genuineness, and canonical authority, tracing at the same time their origin, preservation, and integrity, and exhibiting their contents, relative rank, and general character and value. The scientific treatment of these several subjects is often called the "Higher Criticism." Textual Criticism has for its special object the ascertaining of the exact words of the original texts of the sacred books. Its method of procedure is to collate and compare ancient manuscripts, ancient versions, and ancient scripture quotations, and, by careful and discriminating judgment, sift conflicting testimony, weigh the evidences of all kinds, and thus endeavour to determine the true reading of every doubtful text. This science is often called the "Lower Criticism." Where such criticism ends, Hermeneutics properly begins, and aims to establish the principles, methods, and rules which are needful to unfold the sense of what is written. Its object is to elucidate whatever may be obscure or ill-defined, so that every reader may be able, by an intelligent process, to obtain the exact ideas intended by the author. Exegesis is the application of these principles and laws, the actual bringing out into formal statement, and by other terms, the meaning of the author's words. Exegesis is related to hermeneutics as preaching is to homiletics, or, in general, as practice is to theory. Exposition is another word often used synonymously with exegesis, and has essentially the same signification; and yet, perhaps, in common usage, exposition denotes a more extended development and illustration of the sense, dealing more largely with other scriptures by comparison and contrast. We observe, accordingly, that the writer on Biblical Introduction examines the historical foundations and canonical authority of the books of Scripture. The textual critic detects interpolations, emends false readings, and aims to give us the very words which the sacred writers used. The exegete takes up these words, and by means of the principles of hermeneutics, defines their meaning, elucidates the

Distinguished from Introduction, Criticism, and Exegesis.

Textual Criticism.

Exegesis and Exposition.

scope and plan of each writer, and brings forth the grammatico-historical sense of what each book contains. The expositor builds upon the labours both of critics and exegetes, and sets forth in fuller form, and by ample illustration, the ideas, doctrines, and moral lessons of the Scripture.[1]

But while we are careful to distinguish hermeneutics from these kindred branches of exegetical theology, we should not fail to note that a science of interpretation must essentially depend on exegesis for the maintenance and illustration of its principles and rules. As the full grammar of a language establishes its principles by sufficient examples and by formal praxis, so a science of hermeneutics must needs verify and illustrate its principles by examples of their practical application. Its province is not merely to define principles and methods, but also to exemplify and illustrate them. Hermeneutics, therefore, is both a science and an art. As a science, it enunciates principles, investigates the laws of thought and language, and classifies its facts and results. As an art, it teaches what application these principles should have, and establishes their soundness by showing their practical value in the elucidation of the more difficult scriptures. The hermeneutical art thus cultivates and establishes a valid exegetical procedure.

Hermeneutics both a Science and an Art.

The necessity of a science of interpretation is apparent from the diversities of mind and culture among men. Personal intercourse between individuals of the same nation and language is often difficult and embarrassing by reason of their different styles of thought and expression. Even the Apostle Peter found in Paul's epistles things which were difficult to understand (*δυσνόητα*, 2 Pet. iii, 16). The man of broad and liberal culture lives and moves in a different world from the unlettered peasant, so much so that sometimes the ordinary conversation of the one is scarcely intelligible to the other. Different schools of metaphysics and opposing systems of theology have often led their several advocates into strange misunderstandings. The speculative philosopher, who ponders long on abstract themes, and by deep study

Necessity of Hermeneutics.

[1] Doedes thus discriminates between explaining and interpreting: "To explain, properly signifies the unfolding of what is contained in the words, and to interpret, the making clear of what is not clear by casting light on that which is obscure. Very often one interprets by means of explaining, namely, when, by unfolding the sense of the words, light is reflected on what is said or written; but it cannot be said that one explains by interpreting. While explaining generally is interpreting, interpreting, properly speaking, is not explaining. But we do not usually observe this distinction in making use of these terms, and may without harm use them promiscuously." Manual of Hermeneutics, p. 4.

constructs a doctrine or system clear to his own mind, may find it difficult to set forth his views to others so as to prevent all misconception. His whole subject matter lies beyond the range of common thought. The hearers or readers, in such a case, must, like the philosopher himself, dwell long upon the subject. They must have terms defined, and ideas illustrated, until, step by step, they come to imbibe the genius and spirit of the new philosophy. But especially great and manifold are the difficulties of understanding the writings of those who differ from us in language and nationality. The learned themselves become divided in their essays to decipher and interpret the records of the past. Volumes and libraries have been written to elucidate the obscurities of the Greek and Roman classics. The foremost scholars and linguists of the present generation are busied in the study and exposition of the sacred books of the Chinese, the Hindus, the Parsees, and the Egyptians, and, after all their learned labours, they disagree in the translation and solution of many a passage. How much more might we expect great differences of opinion in the interpretation of a book like the Bible, composed at sundry times and in many parts and modes, and ranging through many departments of literature! What obstacles might reasonably be expected in the interpretation of a record of divine revelation, in which heavenly thoughts, unknown to men before, were made to express themselves in the imperfect formulas of human speech! The most contradictory rules of interpretation have been propounded, and expositions have been made to suit the peculiar tastes and prejudices of writers or to maintain preconceived opinions, until all scientific method has been set at nought, and each interpreter became a law unto himself. Hence the necessity of well-defined and self-consistent principles of Scripture interpretation. Only as exegetes come to adopt common principles and methods of procedure, will the interpretation of the Bible attain the dignity and certainty of an established science.

Rank and importance of Hermeneutics in Theological Science.

The rank and importance of Biblical Hermeneutics among the various studies embraced in Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology is apparent from the fundamental relation which it sustains to them all. For the Scripture revelation is itself essentially the centre and substance of all theological science. It contains the clearest and fullest exhibition of the person and character of God, and of the spiritual needs and possibilities of man. A sound and trustworthy interpretation of the scripture records, therefore, is the root and basis of all revealed theology. Without it Systematic Theology, or Dogmatics, could not be legitimately constructed, and would, in fact, be essentially

impossible. For the doctrines of revelation can only be learned from a correct understanding of the oracles of God. Historical Theology, also, tracing as it does the thought and life of the Church, must needs take cognizance of the principles and methods of scripture interpretation which have so largely controlled in the development of that thought and life. The creeds of Christendom assume to rest upon the teachings of the inspired Scriptures. Apologetics, polemics, ethics, and all that is embraced in Practical Theology, are ever making appeal to the authoritative records of the Christian faith. The great work of the Christian ministry is to preach the word; and that most important labour cannot be effectually done without a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and skill in the interpretation and application of the same. Personal piety and practical godliness are nourished by the study of this written word. The psalmist sings (Psa. cxix, 105, 111):

> A lamp to my foot is thy word,
> And a light to my pathway.
> I have taken possession of thy testimonies forever,
> For the joy of my heart are they.[1]

The Apostle Paul admonished Timothy that the Holy Scriptures were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (2 Tim. iii, 15). And Jesus himself, interceding for his own chosen followers, prayed, "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John xvii, 17). Accordingly, the Lord's ambassador must not adulterate (2 Cor. ii, 17), but rightly divide, the word of the truth (2 Tim. ii, 15). For if ever the divinely appointed ministry of reconciliation accomplish the perfecting of the saints, and the building up of the body of Christ, so as to bring all to the attainment of the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God (Eph. iv, 12, 13), it must be done by a correct interpretation and efficient use of the word of God. The interpretation and application of that word must rest upon a sound and self-evidencing science of hermeneutics.

[1] All scripture quotations in the present work have been made by translating directly from the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek originals. To have followed the Authorized Version would have necessitated a large amount of circumlocution. In many instances the citation of a text is designed to illustrate a process as well as a principle of hermeneutics. It is often desirable to bring out, either incidentally or prominently, some noticeable emphasis, and this can be done best by giving the exact order of the words of the original. The observance of such order in translation may sometimes violate the usage and idiom of the best English, but, in many cases, it yields the best possible translation.

CHAPTER II.

QUALIFICATIONS OF AN INTERPRETER.

In order to be a capable[1] and correct interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, one needs a variety of qualifications, both natural and acquired. For though a large proportion of the sacred volume is sufficiently simple for the child to understand, and the common people and the unlearned may find on every page much that is profitable for instruction in righteousness, there is also much that requires, for its proper apprehension and exposition, the noblest powers of intellect and the most ample learning. The several qualifications of a competent interpreter may be classified as Intellectual, Educational, and Spiritual. The first are largely native to the soul; the second are acquired by study and research; the third may be regarded both as native and acquired.

Intellectual Qualifications.

First of all, the interpreter of Scripture, and, indeed, of any other book, should have a sound, well-balanced mind. For dulness of apprehension, defective judgment, and an extravagant fancy will pervert one's reason, and lead to many vain and foolish notions. The faculties of the mind are capable of discipline, and may be trained to a very high degree of perfection; but some men inherit peculiar tendencies of intellect. Some are gifted with rare powers of imagination, but are utterly wanting in the critical faculty. A lifetime of discipline will scarcely restrain their exuberant fancy. Others are naturally given to form hasty judgments, and will rush to the wildest extremes. In others, peculiar tastes and passions warp the judgment, and some seem to be constitutionally destitute of common sense. Any and all such mental defects disqualify one for the interpretation of the word of God.

Defective mental powers disqualify.

A ready perception is specially requisite in the interpreter. He must have the power to grasp the thought of his author, and take in at a glance its full force and bearing. With such ready perception there must be united a breadth of view and clearness of understanding which will be quick to catch, not only the import of words and phrases, but also the drift of the

Quick and clear perception.

[1] Comp. the import of *ἱκανοί*, *ἱκανότης*, and *ἱκάνωσεν* in 2 Cor. iii, 5, 6.

argument. Thus, for example, in attempting to explain the Epistle to the Galatians, a quick perception will note the apologetic tone of the first two chapters, the bold earnestness of Paul in asserting the divine authority of his apostleship, and the far-reaching consequences of his claim. It will also note how forcibly the personal incidents referred to in Paul's life and ministry enter into his argument. It will keenly appreciate the impassioned appeal to the "foolish Galatians" at the beginning of chapter third, and the natural transition from thence to the doctrine of Justification. The variety of argument and illustration in the third and fourth chapters, and the hortatory application and practical counsels of the two concluding chapters will also be clearly discerned; and then the unity, scope, and directness of the whole Epistle will lie pictured before the mind's eye as a perfect whole, to be appreciated more and more fully as additional attention and study are given to minuter details.

Acuteness of intellect.

The great exegetes have been noted for acuteness of intellect, a critical sharpness to discern at once the connexion of thought, and the association of ideas. This qualification is of great importance to every interpreter. He must be quick to see what a passage does not teach, as well as to comprehend its real import. His critical acumen should be associated with a masterly power of analysis, in order that he may clearly discern all the parts and relations of a given whole. Bengel and De Wette, in their works on the New Testament, excel in this particular. They evince an intellectual sagacity, which is to be regarded as a special gift, an inborn endowment, rather than a result of scientific culture.

Imagination needed, but must be controlled.

The strong intellect will not be destitute of imaginative power. Many things in narrative description must be left to be supplied, and many of the finest passages of Holy Writ cannot be appreciated by an unimaginative mind. The true interpreter must often transport himself into the past, and picture in his soul the scenes of ancient time. He must have an intuition of nature and of human life by which to put himself in the place of the biblical writers and see and feel as they did. But it has usually happened that men of powerful imagination have been unsafe expositors. An exuberant fancy is apt to run away with the judgment, and introduce conjecture and speculation in place of valid exegesis. The chastened and disciplined imagination will associate with itself the power of conception and of abstract thought, and be able to construct, if called for, working hypotheses to be used in illustration or in argument. Sometimes it may be expedient to form a concept, or adopt a theory, merely for the purpose

of pursuing some special line of discussion; and every expositor should be competent for this when needed.

But, above all things, an interpreter of Scripture needs a sound and sober judgment. His mind must be competent to analyze, examine, and compare. He must not allow himself to be influenced by hidden meanings, and spiritualizing processes, and plausible conjectures. He must weigh reasons for and against a given interpretation; he must judge whether his principles are tenable and self-consistent; he must often balance probabilities, and reach conclusions with the greatest caution. Such a discriminating judgment may be trained and strengthened, and no pains should be spared to render it a safe and reliable habit of the mind. Sober judgment.

Correctness and delicacy of taste will be the result of a discriminating judgment. The interpreter of the inspired volume will find the need of this qualification in discerning the manifold beauties and excellences scattered in rich profusion through its pages. But his taste, as well as his judgment, must be trained to discern between the true and the false ideals. Many a modern whim of shallow refinement is offended with the straightforward honesty and simplicity of the ancient world. Prurient sensitiveness often blushes before expressions in the Scriptures which are as far as possible removed from impurity. Correct taste in such cases will pronounce according to the real spirit of the writer and his age. Correct and delicate taste.

The use of reason in the interpretation of Scripture is everywhere to be assumed. The Bible comes to us in the forms of human language, and appeals to our reason and judgment; it invites investigation, and condemns a blind credulity. It is to be interpreted as we interpret any other volume, by a rigid application of the same laws of language, and the same grammatical analysis. Even in passages which may be said to lie beyond the province of reason, in the realm of supernatural revelation, it is still competent for the rational judgment to say whether, indeed, the revelation be supernatural. In matters beyond its range of vision, reason may, by valid argument, explain its own incompetency, and by analogy and manifold suggestion show that there are many things beyond its province which are nevertheless true and righteous altogether, and to be accepted without dispute. Reason itself may thus become efficient in strengthening faith in the unseen and eternal. Use of reason.

But it behooves the expounder of God's word to see that all his principles and processes of reasoning are sound and self-consistent.

He must not commit himself to false premises; he must abstain from confusing dilemmas; he must especially refrain from rushing to unwarranted conclusions. Nor must he ever take for granted things which are doubtful, or open to serious question. All such logical fallacies will necessarily vitiate his expositions, and make him a dangerous guide. The right use of reason in biblical exposition is seen in the cautious procedure, the sound principles adopted, the valid and conclusive argumentation, the sober sense displayed, and the honest integrity and self-consistency everywhere maintained. Such exercise of reason will always commend itself to the godly conscience and the pure heart.

Apt to teach.

In addition to the above-mentioned qualifications, the interpreter should be "apt to teach" (διδακτικός, 2 Tim. ii, 24). He must not only be able to understand the Scriptures, but also to set forth in clear and lively form to others what he himself comprehends. Without such aptness in teaching, all his other gifts and qualities will avail little or nothing. Accordingly, the interpreter should cultivate a clear and simple style, and study to bring out the truth and force of the inspired oracles so that others will readily understand.

Educational Qualifications.

The professional interpreter of Scripture needs more than a well-balanced mind, discreet sense, and acuteness of intellect. He needs stores of information in the broad and varied fields of history, science, and philosophy. By many liberal studies will his faculties become disciplined and strong for practical use; and extensive and accurate knowledge will furnish and fit him to be the teacher of others. The biblical interpreter should be minutely acquainted with

Geography.

the geography of Palestine and the adjacent regions. In order to be properly versed in this, he will need to understand the physical character of the world outside of Bible lands. For, though the sacred writers may have known nothing of countries foreign to Asia, Africa, and Europe, the modern student will find an advantage in having information, as full as possible, of the entire surface of the globe. With such geographical knowledge

History.

he should also unite a familiar acquaintance with universal history. The records of many peoples, both ancient and modern, will often be of value in testing the accuracy of the sacred writers, and illustrating their excellence and worth. What a vast amount of light have ancient authors, and the deciphered inscriptions of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, shed upon the narratives of the Bible!

The science of chronology is also indispensable to the proper interpretation of the Scriptures. The succession of events, the division of the ages into great eras, the scope of genealogical tables, and the fixing of dates, are important, and call for patient study and laborious care. Nor can the interpreter dispense with the study of antiquities, the habits, customs, and arts of the ancients. He should inquire into the antiquities of all the ancient nations and races of whom any records remain, for the customs of other nations may often throw light upon those of the Hebrews. The study of politics, including international law and the various theories and systems of civil government, will add greatly to the other accomplishments of the exegete, and enable him the better to appreciate the Mosaic legislation, and the great principles of civil government set forth in the New Testament. Many a passage, also, can be illustrated and made more impressive by a thorough knowledge of natural science. Geology, mineralogy, and astronomy, are incidentally touched by statements or allusions of the sacred writers, and whatever the knowledge of the ancients on these subjects, the modern interpreter ought to be familiar with what modern science has demonstrated. The same may be said of the history and systems of speculative thought, the various schools of philosophy and psychology. Many of these philosophical discussions have become involved in theological dogma, and have led to peculiar principles and methods of interpretation, and, to cope fairly with them, the professional exegete should be familiar with all their subtleties. It is also of the first importance that the interpreter possess a profound and accurate knowledge of the sacred tongues. No one can be a master in biblical exposition without such knowledge. To a thorough acquaintance with Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek, he should add some proficiency in the science of comparative philology. Especially will a knowledge of Syriac, Arabic, and other Semitic languages help one to understand the Hebrew and the Chaldee, and acquaintance with Sanskrit and Latin and other Indo-European tongues will deepen and enlarge one's knowledge of the Greek. To all these acquirements the interpreter of God's word should add a familiar acquaintance with general literature. The great productions of human genius, the world-renowned epics, the classics of all the great nations, and the bibles of all religions, will be of value in estimating the oracles of God.

Chronology.

Antiquities.

Politics.

Natural science.

Philosophy.

The sacred tongues.

Comparative philology.

General literature.

It is not denied that there have been able and excellent exposi-

tors who were wanting in many of these literary qualifications. But he who excels as a master can regard no literary attainments as superfluous; and, in maintaining and defending against scepticism and infidelity the faith once delivered to the saints, the Christian apologist and exegete will find all these qualifications indispensable.

Spiritual Qualifications.

Partly a gift, partly acquired.

Intellectual qualities, though capable of development and discipline, are to be regarded as natural endowments; educational or literary acquirements are to be had only by diligent and faithful study; but those qualifications of an interpreter which we call spiritual are to be regarded as partly a gift, and partly acquired by personal effort and proper discipline. Under this head we place all moral and religious qualities, dispositions, and attainments. The spirit is that higher moral nature which especially distinguishes man from the brute, and renders him capable of knowing and loving God. To meet the wants of this spiritual nature the Bible is admirably adapted; but the perverse heart and carnal mind may refuse to entertain the thoughts of God. "The natural man," says Paul, "does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are a folly to him, and he is not able to know, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii, 14).

Desire to know the truth.

First of all, the true interpreter needs a disposition to seek and know the truth. No man can properly enter upon the study and exposition of what purports to be the revelation of God while his heart is influenced by any prejudice against it, or hesitates for a moment to accept what commends itself to his conscience and his judgment. There must be a sincere desire and purpose to attain the truth, and cordially accept it when attained. Such a disposition of heart, which may be more or less strong in early childhood, is then easily encouraged and developed, or as easily perverted. Early prejudices and the natural tendency of the human soul to run after that which is evil, rapidly beget habits and dispositions unfriendly to godliness. "For the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. viii, 7), and readily cleaves to that which seems to remove moral obligation. "Every one that does evil hates the light, and comes not to the light lest his deeds should be reproved" (John iii, 20). A soul thus perverted is incompetent to love and search the Scriptures.

Tender affection.

A pure desire to know the truth is enhanced by a tender affection for whatever is morally ennobling. The writings of John abound in passages of tender feeling, and suggest

how deep natures like his possess an intuition of godliness. Their souls yearn for the pure and the good, and they exult to find it all in God. Such tender affection is the seat of all pure love, whether of God or of man. The characteristic utterance of such a soul is: "Beloved, let us love one another; because love is of God, and every one that loves has been begotten of God, and knows God. . . . God is love; and he that abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1 John iv, 7, 16).

Enthusiasm for the word.

The love of the truth should be fervent and glowing, so as to beget in the soul an enthusiasm for the word of God. The mind that truly appreciates the Homeric poems must imbibe the spirit of Homer. The same is true of him who delights in the magnificent periods of Demosthenes, the easy numbers and burning thoughts of Shakspeare, or the lofty verse of Milton. What fellowship with such lofty natures can he have whose soul never kindles with enthusiasm in the study of their works? So the profound and able exegete is he whose spirit God has touched, and whose soul is enlivened by the revelations of heaven.

Reverence for God.

Such hallowed fervour should be chastened and controlled by a true reverence. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. i, 7). There must be the devout frame of mind, as well as the pure desire to know the truth. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John iv, 24). Therefore, they who would attain the true knowledge of God must possess the reverent, truth-loving spirit; and, having attained this, God will seek them (John iv, 23) and reveal himself to them as he does not unto the world. Comp. Matt. xi, 25; xvi, 17. Nor should we allow ourselves to be deluded by the idea that the human mind must be a *tabula rasa* in order to arrive at sound conclusions. To conform to such an assumption is well pronounced by Neander to be impracticable. "The very attempt," he observes, "contradicts the sacred laws of our being. We cannot entirely free ourselves from presuppositions, which are born with our nature, and which attach to the fixed course of progress in which we ourselves are involved. They control our consciousness, whether we will or no; and the supposed freedom from them is, in fact, nothing else but the exchange of one set for another. Some of these prepossessions, springing from a higher necessity, founded in the moral order of the universe, and derived from the eternal laws of the Creator, constitute the very ground and support of our nature. From them we must not free ourselves."[1]

[1] Life of Jesus Christ. Translated by McClintock and Blumenthal; p. 1. N. Y., 1848.

Communion with the Holy Spirit.

Finally, the expounder of the Holy Scriptures needs to have living fellowship and communion with the Holy Spirit. Inasmuch as "all Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Tim. iii, 16), and the sacred writers spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. i, 21), the interpreter of Scripture must be a partaker of the same Holy Spirit. He must, by a profound experience of the soul, attain the saving knowledge of Christ, and in proportion to the depth and fulness of that experience he will know the life and peace of the "mind of the Spirit" (Rom. vi, 6). "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery," says Paul (1 Cor. ii, 7–11), the hidden spiritual wisdom of a divinely illuminated heart, which none of the princes of this world have known, but (as it is in substance written in Isa. lxiv, 4), a wisdom relating to "what things (ἅ) eye did not see, and ear did not hear, and into man's heart did not enter—whatever things (ὅσα) God prepared for them that love him; for[1] to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who of men knows the things of the man except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also the things of God no one knows except the Spirit of God." He, then, who would know and explain to others "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xiii, 11) must enter into blessed communion and fellowship with the Holy One. He should never cease to pray (Eph. i, 17, 18) "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give him the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the full knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of him, the eyes of his heart being enlightened for the purpose of knowing what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe."

[1] We follow here the reading of Westcott and Hort, who receive γάρ into the text. This reading has the strong support of Codex B, and would have been quite liable to be changed to the more numerously supported reading δέ by reason of a failure to apprehend the somewhat involved connection of thought. The γάρ gives the reason *why we speak* God's mysterious wisdom, *for to us God revealed it* through the Spirit. "Is it in truth the word of God," says T. Lewis, "is it really God speaking to us? Then the feeling and the conclusion which it necessitates are no hyperboles. We cannot go too far in our reverence, or in our expectation of knowledge surpassing in kind, if not in extent. The wisdom of the earth, of the seas, of the treasures hidden in the rocks, and all deep places, or of the stars afar off, brings us not so nigh the central truth of the heavens, the very mind and the thought of God, as one parable of Christ." The Divine Human in the Scriptures, pp. 25, 26. New York, 1859.

CHAPTER III.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

A KNOWLEDGE of the history of biblical interpretation is of inestimable value to the student of the Holy Scriptures. It serves to guard against errors and exhibits the activity and efforts of the human mind in its search after truth and in relation to noblest themes. It shows what influences have led to the misunderstanding of God's word, and how acute minds, carried away by a misconception of the nature of the Bible, have sought mystic and manifold meanings in its contents. From the first, the Scriptures, like other writings, were liable to be understood in different ways. The Old Testament prophets complained of the slowness of the people to apprehend spiritual things (Isa. vi, 10; Jer. v, 21; Ezek. xii, 2). The apostolical epistles were not always clear to those who first received them (comp. 2 Thess. ii, 2; 2 Pet. iii, 16). When the Old and New Testaments assumed canonical form and authority, and became the subject of devout study and a means of spiritual discipline, they furnished a most inviting field for literary research and theological controversy. On the one hand, there were those who made light of what the prophets had written, attacked the sacred books, and perverted their meaning; on the other, there arose apologists and defenders of the holy volume, and among them not a few who searched for hidden treasures, and manifold meanings in every word. Besides assailants and apologists there were also many who, withdrawing from the field of controversy, searched the Scriptures on account of their religious value, and found in them wholesome food for the soul. The public teachers of religion, in oral and written discourses, expounded and applied the oracles of God to the people. Hence, in the course of ages, a great variety of expositions and a vast amount of biblical literature have appeared. The student who acquaints himself with the various methods of exposition, and with the works of the great exegetes of ancient and modern times, is often saved thereby from following new developments of error, and is guarded against the novelties of a restless fancy. He observes how learned men, yielding to subtle speculation and fanciful analogies, have become the founders of schools

Value and importance of history of interpretation.

Origin and variety of interpretations.

and systems of interpretation. At the same time he becomes more fully qualified to maintain and defend the faith once delivered to the saints.

It was the distinguishing advantage of the Jewish people that they were entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom. iii, 1, 2). But during the long period between Moses and the Babylonian captivity they showed little appreciation of their heavenly treasure. The law was ignored, the prophets were persecuted, the people turned to idolatry, and the penalty of exile and dispersion, foreannounced by Jehovah himself (Deut. xxviii, 63, 64), followed at last with terrible severity. In the land of exile, a descendant of Aaron the high priest, hopeless of Israel's rise by worldly prowess, set his heart upon the devout study of the ancient Scriptures. "Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of Jehovah and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra vii, 10). Possibly the one hundred and nineteenth psalm was the result of that study, and shows the impression the law made upon that studious priest while yet a young man. A profound appreciation of God's law, such as this psalm evinces, would prompt a man like Ezra to seek the reformation of Israel by calling them to a rigid obedience of the commandments. We may, accordingly, date the beginning of formal exposition of the Scriptures in the time of Ezra. A need was then felt, as not before, of appealing to the oracles of God. The Book of the Law was recognized as fundamental in the records of divine revelation. The noblest Israelite was he who delighted in Jehovah's law, and meditated therein by night and by day (Psa. i, 2; comp. Psa. cxix, 34, 35, 97). The loss of temple, throne, palace, and regal splendour turned the heart of the devout Jew to a more diligent inquiry after the words of Jehovah.

Ezra the scribe.

Ezra, accordingly, led a company of exiles back to Jerusalem and instituted numerous reforms. The commandments forbidding intermarriage with the heathen were rigidly enforced, and the legal feasts and fasts were observed. The public instruction of the people, as recorded in Neh. viii, 1–8, was a measure designed to make known the will of Jehovah, and to develop a purer religious sentiment among the people. Thenceforth the office and work of the scribe became important. He was no longer the mere recorder of passing events, the secretary, clerk, or registrar of the king (2 Sam. viii, 17; 1 Kings iv, 3), but the copyist and authorized expounder of the sacred books. Their devotion to the study and interpretation of the law brought to the scribes after a time the title of lawyers (*νομικοί*).

Public instruction in the law.

The office and work of the scribes.

At an early period they became known as a distinct class, and were spoken of as families or guilds (1 Chron. ii, 55). Ezra is to be regarded as a distinguished representative of his class. He was not the only scribe who returned from Babylon (Ezra viii, 16). On the occasion of the public reading of the law he had the assistance of learned Levites, who were able to explain the ancient Scriptures to the people. Constant searching of these holy writings led to the various reforms narrated in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Progress of Jewish exegesis after Ezra.

The progress of Jewish exegesis from the time of Ezra to the beginning of the Christian era may be dimly traced in scattered notices of the learned Jews of that period, in the pre-Christian apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature, in the works of Philo Judæus and Josephus, and in the Talmud. The rigid measures adopted by Ezra, Nehemiah, and their associates would seem to have prepared the way for Pharisaism. The scribes of the period succeeding that of Nehemiah not only copied the sacred books, and explained their general import, but took measures to make a hedge about the law. They set a value on the very letters of the law, and counted their number.[1] They scrupulously guarded against interpolations and changes, but, at the same time, they gathered up traditions and constructed an oral law which in time came to have with them an authority equal to that of the sacred books. Thus originated the Jewish Halachah and Hagadah, the legal and homiletic exegesis. These expositions constitute the Midrashim, or most ancient Jewish commentary. The Halachic, or legal exegesis, was confined to the Pentateuch, and aimed, by analogy and combination of specific written laws, to deduce precepts and rules on subjects which had not been formally treated in the Mosaic Code. This was, in the main, a reading into the laws of Moses a great variety of things which they could not, by any fair interpretation, be made to teach. The Hagadic exegesis, on the other hand, was extended over the entire Old Testament Scriptures, and was of a more practical and homiletical character. It aimed, by means of memorable sayings of illustrious men, parables, allegories, marvellous legends, witty proverbs, and mystic interpretations of Scripture events, to stimulate the Jewish people to pious activity and obedience. The Midrashim thus became a vast treasury of Hebrew national lore. It was developed gradually, by public lectures and homilies, and became more and more comprehensive and complicated as new legends, secret meanings, hidden wisdom, and allegorical expositions were added by one great teacher after another. We

Halachah and Hagadah.

The Midrashim.

[1] See Ginsburg, article Scribes, in Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.

have the substance of the Midrashim preserved in the Talmud and the Hagadic literature of the first three centuries of the Christian era.[1]

The later Jewish exegesis was influenced by controversies with Christians, and by the sect of the synagogue known as the Karaites (קְרָאִים, *readers*, or literalists), who rejected the authority of the oral law, and all the traditions and precepts of Hagadic literature. The strict methods of these literalists tended to restrain the extravagance of the rabbinical schools, and to promote a more rational study of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Methods of Christian exegesis indicated in the New Testament.

We naturally look to the New Testament for the earliest indications of the spirit and methods of Christian exegesis. The divine Founder of Christianity constantly appealed to the Scriptures of the Old Testament as to a sacred authority, and declared that they bore testimony of himself (John v, 39; comp. Luke xxiv, 27). With equal emphasis did he condemn the current Halachic and Hagadic tradition of the elders, which in some instances nullified the commandments of God (Matt. xv, 1–9; Mark vii, 1–13). He reproved the Sadducees also for not understanding the Scriptures and the power of God (Matt. xxii, 29). The error of the disciples in construing the prophecy of the coming of Elijah (Mal. iv, 5) to mean a literal return of the ancient Tishbite—an error which they had received from the scribes—was exposed by showing that the "spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke i, 17) had reappeared in John the Baptist (Matt. xi, 14; xvii, 10–13). Paul makes mention of his proficiency in Judaism (*ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ*), and his excessive zeal for the traditions of his fathers, for which he was noted before his conversion (Gal. i, 13, 14); but after it pleased God to give him the revelation of his grace in Jesus Christ, he denounced "Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn away from the truth" (Titus i, 14), and also "foolish questionings and genealogies and strife and fightings (or controversies) about the law" (Titus iii, 9). He counselled Timothy to "turn away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the falsely named knowledge" (*τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως*, 1 Tim. vi, 20), and warned the Colossians against the spoiling tendencies of "philoso-

[1] Ishmael Ben-Elisa's Commentary on Exodus xii–xxiii, called Mechilta (מכלתא), is an allegorical treatment of various Mosaic ceremonies, and is one of the oldest specimens of formal Jewish exposition. Ishmael Ben-Elisa flourished about the close of the first and the beginning of the second century of our era, and was the author of several mystic treatises which are still extant. His Mechilta with a Latin translation is given by Ugolino in the Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum, vol. xiv, Venice, 1752. A German translation of numerous ancient Midrashim is given by Wünsche, Bibliotheca Rabbinica; eine Sammlung alter Midrashim zum ersten Male ins Deutsche übertragen, Lpz., 1880–1881, 12 thin vols., 8vo.

phy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. ii, 8; comp. 1 Tim. i, 4; iv, 7; 2 Tim. ii, 14–16, 23). In these admonitions and warnings there is a manifest reference to the Jewish Midrashim and the speculative tendencies of that age. It was a time of intense mental activity throughout the Roman world, especially in the more eastern cities, where Greek philosophy and oriental mysticism met and blended, as in the case of Philo of Alexandria. The endless genealogies and the falsely named knowledge indicate the beginnings of heretical Gnosticism, already disturbing the faith and practice of the Christian Church. From all which it appears that neither the Hagadic exegesis and ancestral traditions of the Jews, nor the allegorizing and speculative habit of Hellenists like Philo, received encouragement from Christ or his apostles. Paul's single instance of allegorizing the history of Hagar and Sarah was essentially an *argumentum ad hominem*, professedly put as a special plea to those "who desire to be under law" (Gal. iv, 21). Its exceptional character only serves to set in stronger light Paul's constant habit elsewhere of construing the Scriptures according to the simple and natural import of the words. Our Lord's answer to the Sadducees, in Matt. xxii, 31–33, is also to be regarded as an exceptional and peculiar argument, designed to confound and silence captious assailants, not to encourage or sanction subtle uses of the Scriptures.

Hagadic methods condemned.

But though the New Testament exhibits in itself the principles and methods of a sound and trustworthy exegesis, the widely prevalent Hellenistic habit of allegorizing what seemed offensive to philosophic taste carried along with its strong tide many of the Christian writers of the post-apostolic age. The Church of this early period was too much engaged in struggles for life to develop an accurate or scientific interpretation of Scripture. There was great intellectual activity, and the early forms of heresy which disturbed the Church developed by controversy great strength and subtlety of reasoning. But the tone and style of the earlier writers were apologetical and polemical rather than exegetical. Harassed by persecution, distracted by occasional factions, and exposed to manifold dangers, the early Christian propagandists had no opportunities to cultivate those habits of careful study which lead to broad generalization and impartial decisions. In the hurry and pressure of exciting times men take readily what first comes to hand, or serves an immediate purpose, and it was very natural that many of the early Christian writers should make use of methods of Scripture interpretation which were widely prevalent at the time.

Allegorizing tendency of the post-apostolic age.

School of Alexandria.

After the beginning of the third century biblical interpretation was notably influenced by the famous schools of Alexandria and Antioch. Long before the time of Christ Alexandria had become a great literary centre. The Asiatic mystic, the Jewish rabbi, and the Greek and Roman philosopher there came together and interchanged their thoughts. In the writings of Philo Judæus we trace the development of the Halachic and Hagadic principles as they became coloured by Hellenic culture. This philosophical Jew united a deep reverence for the Mosaic revelation with an absorbing fondness for Grecian metaphysics. In his writings he appears at times to allow the literal sense of a passage, but his great aim is to exhibit the mystic depths of significance which lie concealed beneath the sacred words. He shows no conception of the historical standpoint of his author, no appreciation of the truthfulness or accuracy of the statements of Moses, but often writes as if he really thought the Hellenic philosophy was a natural and necessary part of the laws of the Pentateuch. But Philo was not the author of this system of exegesis, nor did it end with him. The mingling of diverse religionists and philosophies in that great metropolis encouraged all manner of speculation, and we need not wonder that the great lights of the Alexandrian Church fell into habits of mystical and allegorical exposition. One of the earliest representatives of this school whose works have come down to us was Titus Flavius Clement. He was preceded by Pantænus and others, who, like Apollos, had profited by Alexandrian culture and were "mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts xviii, 24). But Clement was a fanciful interpreter. He was charmed with the Greek philosophy, read Philo's work with avidity, and adopted his allegorical methods of exposition. He was succeeded at Alexandria by a pupil greater than himself, a man of purest character, who, while yet a little child disclosed a remarkable insight into the depth and fulness of the Scriptures, and later, by his untiring devotion to multifarious studies, and his indomitable firmness through bitter trials, acquired the name of Man of Adamant. This man was Origen, the most distinguished biblical critic of the ancient Church. His veneration for the Scriptures led him to ascribe a sort of magical value to the original text, and he accordingly sought to establish it by the widest possible collation and comparison of existing versions. In his Hexapla he arranged, in six parallel columns, the Hebrew text, a Greek transliteration of the same, the Septuagint, and the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Some pages, which contained books of which other versions were extant, were arranged in seven, eight, or nine columns, according to the number of the versions. On

this immense work, which extended to nearly fifty volumes, he was engaged for twenty-eight years.[1] But with all his devotion to the interests of truth, and the enormous magnitude of his labors, he was a mystico-allegorical interpreter. He followed in the path of Philo the Jew, and Clement the Christian, and, assuming that many portions of the Bible are unreasonable and absurd when taken literally, he maintained a threefold sense—the corporeal, the physical, and the spiritual. But he protests against being supposed to teach that no history is real, and no laws are to be literally observed, because some narratives and laws, literally understood, are absurd or impossible. "For," he says, "the passages that are true in their historical sense are much more numerous than those which have a purely spiritual signification."[2]

Driven by persecution from Alexandria, he resorted to Cæsarea, in Palestine, and there established a school which for a time surpassed that of the Egyptian metropolis. The magnetism of his person, and his wide-spread fame as an expounder of the Scriptures, attracted great multitudes to him. His pernicious habit of explaining the sacred records as the Platonists explained the heathen myths, and his peculiar views touching the pre-existence of souls, a new probation after death, and some other doctrines, were so far offset by his pure zeal for God, and his many and great virtues, that he has been quite generally acknowledged as pre-eminently the father of biblical science, and one of the greatest prodigies of learning and industry among men.[3]

To Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts xi, 26), belongs the honor of introducing a more scientific and profitable system of biblical study. Its founder was Lucian, who in early life studied at Edessa, and laid the foundation of his thorough scholarship under the training of Macarius, an eminent teacher of that city. He afterward removed to Antioch, where he was ordained presbyter, and acquired great fame as a critical student and expounder of the Holy Scriptures. His stricter methods put a check to the allegorical and mystical interpretation

The School of Antioch.

[1] The remains of this great work were collected and published in two folio volumes by Montfaucon, Paris, 1713. Revised edition by Bahrdt, Lpz., 1769–70, 2 vols. 8vo. It is also published in vols. xv and xvi of Migne's Greek Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, and in two fine quartos by Field, Oxford, 1875.

[2] De Principiis, book iv, chap. i, 11.

[3] Origen's works have been printed in many editions. The best is that of the Benedictines De la Rue, Paris, 1733–59, 4 vols. fol. It is reprinted in Migne's Greek Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, Paris, 9 vols. English translations of the De Principiis, the Contra Celsum, and several of his epistles are given in vols. x and xxiii of the Edinburgh Ante-Nicene Christian Library.

so popular at the time, and which had received great strength and currency by the influence of Origen. This sounder method of exegesis was further promoted by Diodorus, who was also for some time a distinguished presbyter of Antioch, but afterward became bishop of Tarsus. The church historian, Socrates, speaks of him as president of a monastery and author of "many treatises, in which he limited his expositions to the literal sense of Scripture, without attempting to explain what was mystical."[1] He is said to have written commentaries on all the books of the Old Testament, and also on considerable portions of the New.[2] Some do not hesitate to make him the real founder of the school of Antioch.

Theodore of Mopsuestia.

The two most distinguished disciples of Diodorus were Theodore of Mopsuestia, and John Chrysostom of Constantinople. Both of them studied philosophy and rhetoric in the school of the celebrated sophist Libanius, the friend of the Emperor Julian. Theodore was made a presbyter at Antioch, but rapidly acquired reputation, and was made bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia, about A. D. 390. His long life and incessant labour as a Christian teacher, the extent of his learning, the vigour and acuteness of his intellect, and the force of his personal character, won for him the title of Master of the Orient. He was a prolific author, and composed commentaries on various books of Scripture, of which only his exposition of the Minor Prophets has been preserved intact until the present time. His commentaries on Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians are preserved in a Latin version.[3] He was an independent critic, and a straightforward, sober, historical interpreter. He had no sympathy with the mystical methods of the Alexandrian school, and repudiated their extravagant notions of inspiration; but he went to an opposite extreme of denying the inspiration of many portions of the Scriptures, and furnished specimens of rationalistic exposition quite barren and unsatisfactory. Nevertheless the Syrian Nestorians regarded him as the greatest of exegetes. His method of teaching the subjects of Christology and anthropology were severely condemned after his decease, especially

[1] Eccl. Hist., book vi, chap. iii.

[2] So stated by Theodore the Reader, as cited in Suidas' Lexicon (Küster's ed. vol., i, p. 593. Cambr., 1705), under the name Diodorus. Fragments of the commentaries of Diodorus are given in vol xxxiii of Migne's Greek Patrologiæ Cursus Completus.

[3] Theodore's Commentary on the Minor Prophets was published by Mai, in vol. vii of his Patrum Nova Bibliotheca (Rome, 1854), and by Wegner (Berol., 1834). Fragments of his other works are given by Fritzsche, Theod. Mops., in N. Test. Comm. (Turici, 1847), and Pitra, Spicil. Solesm. (Par.. 1854). See also Sieffert, Theod. Mops. V. T. sobre interpretandi vindex, (Regiom., 1827), and Kihn, Theod. Mops. und J. Africanus als Exegeten (Fr ib., 1880).

because the Nestorians appealed to them as identical with their own.

Chrysostom.

While Theodore represented the more independent and rationalistic spirit of the Antiochian school, Chrysostom exhibited its more conservative and practical tendency. The tender devotion of a pious Christian mother, the rhetorical polish acquired in the school of Libanius, and the assiduous study of the Scriptures at the monastery of the learned Diodorus, were all together admirably adapted to develop the profound exegete and the eloquent preacher of the word of God. "Through a rich inward experience," says Neander, "he lived into the understanding of the Holy Scriptures; and a prudent method of interpretation, on logical and grammatical principles, kept him in the right track in deriving the spirit from the letter of the sacred volume. His profound and simple, yet fruitful, homiletic method of treating the Scriptures, show to what extent he was indebted to both, and how, in his case, both co-operated together." [1]

Chrysostom wrote more than six hundred homilies on the Scriptures. They consist of expository discourses on Genesis, the Psalms, and most of the New Testament. Those on the Gospel of Matthew and the Pauline epistles are specially valuable, and such modern exegetes as Tholuck and Alford have enriched their pages by numerous quotations from this father. The least valuable of his expository discourses are those upon the prophets, only a few of which remain. His ignorance of Hebrew, and his failure to apprehend the spirit of the Old Testament prophets, are apparent. The homilies on the Psalms, however, though without critical merit, furnish a rich banquet, for Chrysostom's deep religious experience brought him into complete sympathy with the psalmist. Although his credulous nature yielded to many superstitions of his age, and his pious feeling inclined him to asceticism and the self-mortifications of monastic life, John Chrysostom is unquestionably the greatest commentator among the early fathers of the Church. Theodore of Mopsuestia may have been more sharply critical, Origen was more encyclopædic in his learning, and others were more original and profound in apprehending some of the doctrines of the Christian faith, but he surpassed them all in the general good judgment which appears in his expositions, in the richness of his suggestions, and the practical value of what he said or wrote. He is the greatest ornament and noblest representative of the exegetical school of Antioch.[2]

[1] History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. ii, p. 693.

[2] The best edition of Chrysostom's works is that of Montfaucon, Greek and Latin, 13 vols., Paris, 1718–38. Reprinted 1834–39, and also in Migne's Greek Patrology,

In this connexion we should also notice the works of Theodoret, who was trained at the monastery near Antioch, where he abode for twenty years, devoting himself to theological studies. The teachings of Diodorus, Theodore, and Chrysostom, who were identified with this same monastery, exerted great influence over the mind of Theodoret, and he followed substantially their system of biblical interpretation. In his Preface to the Psalms he says: "When I happened upon various commentaries, and found some expositors pursuing allegories with great superabundance, others adapting prophecy to certain histories so as to produce an interpretation accommodated to the Jews rather than to the nurselings of faith, I considered it the part of a wise man to avoid the excess of both, and to connect now with ancient histories whatever things belonged to them." Most of his remaining works are expository, but often mixed with that which is apologetic and controversial.[1] They cover most of the books of the Old Testament, and the epistles of Paul.[2]

Theodoret.

The churches of Syria early developed into two main divisions, those of the eastern and the western provinces. As Antioch was the chief center of the western cities, so were Edessa and Nisibis of the more eastern, and when, after the days of Chrysostom and Theodoret, the school of Antioch declined, those chief centres of Christian activity in Mesopotamia became more famous as seats of literary culture and exegetical learning. The appearance of the Syriac version of the New Testament as early as the middle of the second century, and the Diatessaron of Tatian, indicates the interest of the Syrian mind in the study of the Scriptures. Lucian, the founder of the Antiochian school, received his early training in the Scriptures from Macarius of Edessa. The Ignatian epistles appear also to have exerted great influence in Eastern Syria, and they were early translated into the Syriac tongue. "The school of Eastern Syria," says Dorner, "was distinguished by its vivid fancy, by its religious spirit, at once fiery and practical, by fervour, and, in part, depth of thought. It exhibited, also, a tendency to the impassioned style and too gorgeous imagery of the East, to mysticism and asceticism. . . . The Church of Western Syria displayed, at an early period, that sober, judicious,

Schools of Edessa and Nisibis.

vols. xlvii–lxiv. An English translation of many of the Homilies is given in the Oxford Library of the Fathers, 1842–53.

[1] Comp. Rosenmüller, Historia Interpretationis Librorum Sacrorum vol. iv, pp. 35–142.

[2] The best edition of Theodoret's works is that of Schulze and Nösselt, 5 vols., Halle, 1769–74. See also Migne's Greek Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, vols. lxxx–lxxxiv.

and critical spirit for which it became renowned, and by which it was especially distinguished from the third to the fifth century. The eastern school inclined to theosophy, and thus had a certain affinity with the religious systems which prevailed in the East; the western, on the other hand, took its stand on the firm basis of experience and history. In a word, the contrast between the two divisions of the Syrian Church bore a not inconsiderable resemblance to that which exists between the Lutheran and Reformed Confessions in Germany."[1]

Ephraem Syrus.

One of the greatest fathers of the Syrian Church was Ephraem, commonly called Ephraem Syrus, who flourished at Edessa about A. D. 370. He spent most of his life in writing and preaching, and was a vigorous opponent of Arianism. His learning and piety were the admiration of his contemporaries, and he was often designated as the prophet of the Syrians. He was a voluminous writer, and has left numerous commentaries, homilies, and poems. Many of his exegetical discourses and polemical and practical homilies are written in poetical form. His commentaries on the historical books of the Old Testament and the Book of Job are extant in Syriac, and those of the Pauline epistles in an Armenian translation. It is doubtful whether he understood or used the Greek language. His method of exposition is mainly that of the allegorists, his style is brilliant and glowing, often running into bombast, and his interpretations are often fanciful, farfetched, and extravagant.[2]

Barsumas and Ibas.

The school of Nisibis maintained itself longer than that of Edessa, and continued until the ninth century. The Canon of Nisibis prescribed a three years' course of exegetical study in the Old and New Testaments. Barsumas, who was ejected from the school of Edessa, became bishop of Nisibis in A. D. 435, and founded there the theological seminary which served to maintain and propagate Nestorianism in various countries of the East. The works of Diodorus of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, translated into Syric by Ibas, contributed much toward the cultivation of biblical and theological study throughout Eastern Syria.

The fathers of the Western Church were, as a class, much inferior to those of the Eastern in their expositions of the Scriptures.

[1] History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, div. ii, vol. i, p. 29.

[2] The best edition of the works of Ephraem Syrus is that of Assemanni in six vols., Rome, 1732–46. Nine of the metrical homilies and thirty-five of the Syriac hymns have been translated into English by Burgess: Select Metrical Hymns and Homilies of Ephraem Syrus, London, 1853. See also Lengerke, De Ephraemi Syri arte hermeneutica, Königsb., 1831.

One chief reason for this fact was their comparative ignorance of the original languages of the Bible. A notable exception is that of Hippolytus, bishop of Portus, at the mouth of the Tiber, near Rome. It is doubtful whether he should be claimed more by the West than the East, for he was a disciple of Irenæus, and a friend and admirer of Origen, and, according to Baronius, a disciple of Clement of Alexandria. Nevertheless, it is quite certain that he spent the greater portion of his life in Rome and its vicinity. His great work, recently discovered, on the Refutation of all Heresies, contains numerous expositions of different passages of Scripture, and shows that he was an extreme allegorist. He appears to have written commentaries on most of the Bible, and numerous fragments remain. His exegetical method is substantially that of Philo, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, and in some things, if possible, even more extravagant. Nevertheless, his writings are of great value as exhibiting the heresies and disputes of his time, and some of his Scripture expositions are thoughtful and suggestive.[1]

Hippolytus.

In the later part of the fourth and the earlier part of the fifth century there flourished, contemporaneously, the greatest biblical scholar, the greatest theologian, and the most distinguished heretic, of the ancient Western Church. These were Jerome, Augustine, and Pelagius. Jerome was born at Stridon, on the borders of Pannonia, but early in life removed to Rome, where he diligently prosecuted his studies under the best masters. He afterward travelled through Gaul, and transcribed Hilary's commentary on the Psalms. About A. D. 372 he visited the East, passing through the most interesting provinces of Asia Minor, and pausing for a time at Antioch in Syria. Here he was prostrated by a severe fever, and in a dream received strong condemnation for his devotion to the heathen classics, which he thereupon vowed to renounce forever. He betook himself to monastic life, and thought to crucify his taste for Roman literature by the study of Hebrew. He afterward visited Constantinople, and pursued his studies, especially in Greek, under Gregory of Nazianzum. Here he translated Eusebius' Chronicle, and the commentaries of Origen on Jeremiah and Ezekiel. About A. D. 386 he settled in Bethlehem of Judæa, and there, in monkish seclusion and assiduous study, spent the rest of his life. He wrote commentaries upon most of the books of the Bible, revised the old Latin version, and made a new translation of

Jerome.

[1] The extant works of Hippolytus have been published in many editions, the best of which is, perhaps, that of Lagarde, Lps., 1858. An English translation is given in vols. vi and ix of the Edinburgh Ante-Nicene Christian Library.

the Old Testament from the original Hebrew text. His generation was not competent to appreciate these literary labours, and not a few regarded it as an impious presumption to assume that the Septuagint version could be improved by an appeal to the Hebrew. That seemed like preferring Barabbas to Jesus. Nevertheless, the Vulgate speedily took rank with the great versions of the Bible, and became the authorized translation used in the Western Church. It is more faithful to the Hebrew than the Septuagint, and was probably made with the help of Origen's Hexapla, which was then accessible in the library of Cæsarea.

Osgood on Jerome as a commentator.

"As a commentator," writes Osgood, "Jerome deserves less honour than as a translator, so hasty his comments generally are, and so frequently consisting of fragments, gathered from previous writers. His merit however is— and this was by no means a common one in his day—that he generally aims to give the literal sense of the passages in question. He read apparently all that had been written by the leading interpreters before him, and then wrote his own commentaries in great haste without stopping to distinguish his own views from those of the authorities consulted. He dashed through a thousand lines of the text in a single day, and went through the Gospel of Matthew in a fortnight. He sometimes yielded to the allegorical methods of interpretation, and showed frequent traces of the influence of his study of Origen. Yet he seems not to have inclined to this method so much from his own taste as from the habit of his time. And if, of the four doctors of the Church particularized by some writers, to Gregory belongs excellence in tropology, to Ambrose in allegory, to Augustine in anagoge, to Jerome is given the palm in the literal and grammatical sense. . . . Rich and elegant as his style frequently is, he does not appear to have had very good taste as a critic. He had not that delicate appreciation of an author's meaning that enables one to seize hold of the main idea or sentiment, and through this interpret the language and illustrations. He could not reproduce the thoughts of the prophets and poets of the Old Testament in his own mind, and throw himself into their position. Their poetic figures he sometimes treats as logical propositions, and finds grave dogmas in casual illustrations." [1]

[1] Jerome and his Times; article in the Bibliotheca Sacra for Feb., 1848, pp. 138, 139. The works of Jerome have been published in many forms; best edition, by Vallarsi and Maffei in 11 vols., Verona, 1734–42; reprinted, with some revision, Venice, 1766–71. See also Migne's Latin Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, vols. xxii–xxx, Paris, 1845, 1846. The best treatise on Jerome is that of Zöckler, Hieronymus, sein Leben und Werken aus seinen Schriften dargestellt, Gotha, 1865.

Augustine.

In learning and general culture Jerome was much superior to Augustine, but in depth and penetration, in originality of genius and power of thought, Augustine, bishop of Hippo, in Africa, was by far the greatest man of his age. If it be any evidence of greatness for one mind to shape and direct the theological studies and speculations of more than a thousand years, and after all the enlightenment of modern times to maintain his hold upon men of the deepest piety and the highest intellectual power, then must it be conceded that few if any Christian writers of all the ages have equalled Augustine. But of his doctrines and his rank as a theologian it is not in our way to speak. Only as an interpreter of Scripture do we here consider him, and as such we cannot in justice award him a place correspondent with his theological fame. His conceptions of divine truth were comprehensive and profound, but having no knowledge of Hebrew and a very imperfect acquaintance with Greek, he was incapacitated for thorough and independent study of the sacred books. He was dependent on the current faulty Latin version, and not a few of his theological arguments are built upon an erroneous interpretation of the Scripture text. In his work on Christian Doctrine he lays down a number of very excellent rules for the exposition of the Bible, but in practice he forsakes his own hermeneutical principles, and often runs into excessive allegorizing. He allows four different kinds of interpretation, the historical, the ætiological, the analogical, and the allegorical, but he treats these methods as traditional, and gives them no extended or uniform application. His commentaries on Genesis and Job are of little value. His exposition of the Psalms contains many rich thoughts, together with much that is vague and mystical. The treatise in four books on the Consensus of the Evangelists is one of the best of the ancient attempts to construct a Gospel harmony, but his Evangelical Inquiries (Quaestiones Evangelicae) are full of fanciful interpretation. His best expositions are of those passages on which his own rich experience and profound acquaintance with the operations of the human heart enabled him to comment with surpassing beauty. His exegetical treatises are the least valuable of his multifarious writings, but through all his works are scattered many brilliant and precious gems of thought.[1]

[1] Augustine's works have been printed in very many editions, the latest of which is that of Migne, in 15 vols. Paris, 1842. More sumptuous is the Benedictine edition, in 11 folio vols. Venice, 1729–35. An English translation of his exposition of the Psalms and Gospels is given in the Oxford Library of the Fathers, and his commentary on John, the work on Christian Doctrine, the Enchiridion, and numerous other treatises are published in Clark's Foreign Theological Library, Edinburgh.

During the long period known as the Middle Ages, the true exegetical spirit could scarcely be expected. To this period belong the so-called Catenists, or compilers of expositions from the more ancient fathers. It was not an age of original research, but of imitation and appropriation from the treasures of the past. Among the most noted of these compilers are Procopius of Gaza, Andreas, and Arethas. The venerable Bede, one of the most eminent fathers of the English Church, made himself familiar with all the learning of his age, and wrote commentaries on the entire New Testament, and a large portion of the Old. But they are compilations from the works of Augustine, Basil, and Ambrose. Other names of note are Alcuin, Haymo, and Theophylact. The notes of the last named on the New Testament have always been held in high estimation. Although the works of Chrysostom are the chief source of his extracts, he occasionally expresses his dissent from him, and shows more independence than most of the Catenists. The Catenists.

Nicholas de Lyra flourished at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In addition to the usual studies of his age he acquired a thorough knowledge of Hebrew, a rare accomplishment for a Christian, and his great learning and useful writings secured him the friendship of the most illustrious men of his times, and the title of the "plain and useful doctor." His greatest work is entitled Continuous Comments, or Brief Annotations on the whole Bible (Postillæ perpetuæ, seu brevia commentaria in universa Biblia), and exhibits a great advance upon most of the exegesis of the Middle Ages. For although he recognises a fourfold sense, as shown in the well-known lines, Nicholas de Lyra.

Litera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia,

he gives decided preference to the literal sense, and in his expositions shows comparatively little regard for any other. He frankly acknowledges his indebtedness to the learned Hebrew exegetes, especially Rabbi Solomon Isaac (Rashi), whose sober methods of interpretation he generally followed. The influence his writings had on Luther and other reformers is celebrated in the familiar couplet:

Si Lyra non lyrasset,
Lutherus non saltasset.

His comments on the New Testament are less valuable than those on the Old, and follow closely Augustine and Aquinas. He was ignorant of the Greek language, and based his expositions on the text of the Vulgate.[1] But his great Postillæ perpetuæ accomplished

[1] Comp. Meyer, Geschichte der Schrifterklärung seit der Wiederherstellung der Wissenschaften, vol. i, pp. 109–120.

much in preparing the way of a more thorough grammatical interpretation of the Bible.[1]

John Reuchlin.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, but hardly to be classed with the great reformers, flourished two celebrated scholars to whom biblical literature is greatly indebted, Reuchlin and Erasmus. John Reuchlin was recognised as a leader of the German Humanists, and was particularly famous for his devotion to the study of Hebrew. He justly deserves the title of father of Hebrew learning in the Christian Church. He far surpassed the Jews of his time in the knowledge of their own language, and published, besides many other works, a treatise on the Rudiments of Hebrew, another on the Accents and Orthography of the Hebrew Language, and a Grammatical Interpretation of the Seven Penitential Psalms. He was also acknowledged everywhere as an authority in Latin and Greek, as well as in Hebrew, and the most learned men of his age sought his instruction and counsel. His great services in the cause of biblical learning led men to say of him, "Jerome is born again."

Erasmus.

Desiderius Erasmus was by his wit, wisdom, culture, and varied erudition, the foremost representative, and, one might say, the embodiment, of Humanism. He and Reuchlin were called the "Eyes of Germany." Erasmus became early fascinated with the ancient classics, translated several Greek authors into Latin, and edited numerous editions of their works. He also edited a number of the Greek and Latin fathers. Without any such deep religious experience and profound convictions as Luther, and possessed of no such massive intellect as Melanchthon, he was noted rather for versatility of genius and prodigious literary industry. Nevertheless, he was one of the most distinguished precursors of the Reformation, and it was truly said: "Erasmus laid the egg; Luther hatched it." He appears to have turned his attention to biblical studies about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and published in 1505 a new edition of Lorenzo Valla's Remarks on the New Testament. He edited and published in 1516 the first edition of the Greek Testament. It was printed in folio, accompanied with an elegant Latin version, and various readings from several manuscripts, the works of the fathers, and the Vulgate. The first edition was hastily prepared, precipitated rather than edited, as Erasmus himself wrote, in order to bring it out in advance of Cardinal Ximenes' Conplutensian Polyglot, which did not appear until 1520. Erasmus afterward wrote and published Annotations on the New Testament, and also Paraphrases on the whole New Testament ex-

[1] The best edition of Lyra's Postillæ is that published at Antwerp, 1634, 6 vols. fol.

cept the Book of Revelation, which were so highly esteemed in England that it was required of every parish church to possess a copy of the English translation. These publications introduced a new era in biblical learning, and went far toward supplanting the scholasticism of the previous ages by better methods of theological study.[1]

With the Reformation of the sixteenth century the mind of Germany and of other European states broke away from the ignorance and superstition of the Middle Ages, the Holy Scriptures were appealed to as the written revelation of God, containing all things necessary to salvation, and the doctrine of justification by faith was magnified against priestly absolution and the saving meritoriousness of works. The great commanding mind and leader of this remarkable movement was Martin Luther, who, in October, 1517, published the famous theses which were like the voice of a trumpet sounding forth the beginning of a better day. Five years later he put forth his German translation of the New Testament. This was one of the most valuable services of his life, for it gave to his people the holy oracles in the simple, idiomatic, and racy language of common life, and enabled them to read for themselves the teachings of Christ and the apostles. It was followed by successive portions of the Old Testament until, in 1534, the whole Bible was completed and became of incalculable influence in effecting the triumph of Protestantism. The arduous effort of Luther to make his translation of the Bible as accurate as possible went far toward the establishing of sound methods of criticism and exegesis. His helps in this great enterprise consisted of Erasmus' edition of the New Testament, the Sepuagint, the Vulgate, a few of the Latin fathers, and an imperfect knowledge of the Hebrew. He also received valuable assistance from Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, Jonas, Cruciger, and several learned rabbis. He spent twelve of the best years of his life upon this monumental work. Portions of the original autograph are still preserved in the royal library of Berlin, and show with what anxious care he sought to make the version as faithful as possible. Sometimes three or four different forms of expression were written down before he determined which one to adopt. Luther's commentary on the Galatians, which has been translated into English, and published in many editions, was characterized by himself as being very "plentiful in words." It is an elaborate treatise adapted for use as public lectures and devo-

The Reformation the morning of a better day.

Luther's German Bible.

His exegetical works.

[1] Erasmus' works have been printed in many forms. The best edition is that of Le Clerc, in 11 vols. folio. Leyden, 1703.

tional reading, and is particularly notable for its ample exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith. Luther also prepared notes on Genesis, the Psalms, the Sermon on the Mount, the Gospel of John, and other portions of the New Testament.[1] His knowledge of Hebrew and Greek was limited, and he sometimes mistook the meaning of the sacred writer, but his religious intuitions and deep devotional spirit enabled him generally to apprehend the true sense of Scripture.

Melanchthon.

Although Luther occupies the foremost place among the reformers, he was far surpassed in scholarship and learning by Philip Melanchthon, in whom he found an indispensable friend and helper, in temperament and manners the counterpart of himself. Luther may be compared with Paul, whose bold and fearless spirit he admirably represented; Melanchthon exhibited rather the tender and loving spirit of John. Melanchthon appears to have been favoured with every opportunity and means of education which that age afforded. He was regarded as a prodigy of ancient learning, especially skilled in the knowledge of Greek, a pupil of Reuchlin, and a friend of Erasmus, both of whom extolled his remarkable talents and ripe scholarship. His thorough acquaintance with the original languages of the Scriptures, his calm judgment and cautious methods of procedure, qualified him for preeminence in biblical exegesis. He clearly perceived the Hebraic character of the New Testament Greek, and showed the importance of the study of Hebrew even for the exposition of the Christian Scriptures. As an aid in this line of study he published an edition of the Septuagint. Luther listened with delight to his expository lectures on Romans and Corinthians, obtained his manuscript, and sent it without his knowledge to the printer. On its appearance he wrote to his modest friend thus characteristically: "It is I who publish this commentary of yours, and I send yourself to you. If you are not satisfied with yourself you do right; it is enough that you please us. Yours is the fault, if there be any. Why did you not publish them yourself? Why did you let me ask, command, and urge you to publish to no purpose? This is my defence against you. For I am willing to rob you and to bear the name of a thief. I fear not your complaints or accusations."[2]

Melanchthon's exegetical lectures embrace Genesis, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Daniel, Hag-

[1] Luther's exegetical works in Latin, edited by Elsperger, Schmid, and Irmischer, were published at Erlangen, in 23 vols. 12mo, 1729–44; in German, in vols. xxxiii–lii of his collected works as edited by Irmischer, 1843–53.

[2] Luther's Briefe, Sendschreiben u. Bedenken, ed. De Wette, ii, 238. Comp. ii, 303.

gai, Zechariah, and Malachi, of the Old Testament; and Matthew, John, Romans, Corinthians, Colossians, Timothy, and Titus of the New Testament. Luther's German Bible was greatly indebted to the careful revision of Melanchthon, who himself translated the Books of Maccabees. Although his quiet, meditative tendencies led him at times into allegorical methods of exegesis, which he found so generally adopted by the fathers, he followed in the main the grammatical historical method, was careful to trace the connexion and course of thought, and aimed to ascertain the mind of the Spirit in the written word.[1] His exegetical lectures.

Of all the exegetes of the period of the Reformation the first place must unquestionably be given to John Calvin, whose learning was ample, whose Latin style surpassed in purity and elegance that of any writer of his time, and whose intellect was at once acute and penetrating, profound and comprehensive. His stern views on predestination are too often offensively prominent, and he at times indulges in harsh words against those who differ from him in opinion. In textual and philological criticism he was not equal to Erasmus, Melanchthon, Œcolampadius, or his intimate friend Beza, and he occasionally falls into notably incorrect interpretation of words and phrases; but as a whole, his commentaries are justly celebrated for clearness, good sense, and masterly apprehension of the meaning and spirit of the sacred writers. With the exception of Judges, Ruth, Kings, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song, and the Apocalypse, his comments, expository lectures, and homilies extend over the whole Bible. In his Preface to the Epistle to the Romans he maintains that the chief excellence of an interpreter is a perspicuous brevity which does not divert the reader's thoughts by long and prolix discussions, but directly lays open the mind of the sacred writer. His commentaries, accordingly, while not altogether free from blemishes, exhibit a happy exegetical tact, a ready grasp of the more obvious meaning of words, and an admirable regard to the context, scope, and plan of the author. He seldom quotes from other commentators, and is conspicuously free from mystical, allegorical, and forced methods of exposition. His exegesis breathes everywhere—especially in the Psalms—a most lively religious feeling, indicating that his own personal experience enabled him to penetrate as by intuition into the depths of meaning treasured in the oracles of God.[2] John Calvin.

[1] Melanchthon's works, edited by Bretschneider and Bindseil, form 28 vols. of the Corpus Reformatorum. Halle and Brunswick. 1834–60.

[2] Calvin's works were published in 9 folio vols., Amsterdam, 1671 (best edition).

Theodore Beza.

Next to Calvin we may appropriately notice his intimate friend and fellow reformer, Theodore Beza, who early enjoyed the instruction of such masters as Faber (Stapulensis), Budæus, and John Lascaris, and became so distinguished as an apt and brilliant scholar that of one hundred, who with him received the master's degree, he stood first. He lived to the great age of eighty-six, and was the author of many useful works. The principal monument of his exegetical skill is his Latin translation of the New Testament, with full annotations.[1] He was a consummate critic, a man of remarkable quickness and versatility of intellect, and widely distinguished for his profound and varied learning. His comments are unlike those of Calvin in not making prominent the religious element of the sacred writings, but his philological learning and constant reference to the Greek and Hebrew texts are more conspicuous.

Exegetical tendencies of the Lutheran and Reformed parties.

A careful study of the exegetical writings of the sixteenth century reveals two tendencies which early appeared among the Protestant reformers, and developed gradually during the next two centuries, until in modern times the one has run into extreme rationalism, and the other into a narrow and dogmatic orthodoxy. These tendencies early separated the so-called Lutheran and Reformed parties. The more rigid orthodox Lutherans exhibited a proclivity to authoritative forms, and assumed a dogmatic tone and method in their use of the Scriptures. The Reformed theologians showed greater readiness to break away from churchly customs and traditional ideas, and treat the Scriptures with a respectful, but free, critical spirit. In general exposition no great differences appeared among the early reformers. Luther and Melanchthon represent the dogmatic, Zwingle, Œcolampadius, and Beza the more grammatico-historical method of scriptural interpretation. Calvin combined some elements of both, but belonged essentially to the Reformed party. It was not until two centuries later that a cold, illiberal, and dogmatic orthodoxy provoked an opposite extreme of lawless rationalism.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the progress of

A new edition, edited by Baum, Cunitz, and Reuss, is given in the Corpus Reformatorum, Brunswick, 1863–87 (yet incomplete). Tholuck's edition of his New Testament Commentaries, in 7 vols. 8vo, is a very convenient one. English translation of Calvin's works in 52 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh.

[1] The editio optima of Beza's New Testament was published at Cambridge (1 vol. fol., 1542), and contains his own new translation placed in a column between the Greek text on the one side and the Vulgate on the other. It is accompanied by a copious critical and exegetical commentary by the translator himself, and the commentary of Camerarius is appended to the end of the volume.

biblical criticism and exegesis was most marked. The way for a more thorough grammatical study had been prepared by such philologists as John Buxtorf, Schindler, Vatablus, and Joseph Scaliger. About 1615 Le Jay projected his immense work, the Paris Polyglot. Its publication was begun in 1628 and completed in 1645 in ten imperial folio volumes, containing the entire Bible in seven languages (Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, Samaritan, Greek, and Latin). This costly work, which ruined the fortune of Le Jay, was soon superseded by the London Polyglot of Brian Walton, the first volume of which was issued in 1654 and the sixth and last in 1657. It was followed in 1669 by the Heptaglot Lexicon of Castell in two folio volumes. These massive tomes, together with that great collection of critical and exegetical writings known as the Critici Sacri (London, 1660, nine vols. fol.) and Poole's Synopsis Criticorum (1669–74, five vols. fol.), forming in all twenty-two large folios, begun and finished in the space of twenty-one years (1653–74), at the expense of a few English divines and noblemen, constitute a magnificent exegetical library, and will long endure as a monument of English biblical scholarship in the seventeenth century.

Polyglots and Critici Sacri.

No sketch of the history of biblical interpretation should fail to mention Hugo Grotius, one of the most remarkable men of the seventeenth century, and eminent alike in theology, politics, and general literature. Though suffering the confiscation of his property, imprisonment, and exile, his learning and talents commanded for him the attention of kings and princes, and of the educated men of Europe. Besides learned works in civil jurisprudence, apologetics, and dogmatic theology, he wrote annotations on the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha. His exegesis is distinguished for its philological and historical character, and the uniform good sense displayed throughout. He has been called the forerunner of Ernesti, but he often noticeably fails to grasp the plan and scope of the sacred writers, and to trace the connexion of thought. He lacked the profound religious intuition of Luther and Calvin, and leaned to a rationalistic treatment of Scripture.[1]

Grotius.

One of the most eminent scholars of the Dutch Reformed Church of the seventeenth century was Voetius, who received his early training at Leyden under Gomar, Arminius, and their colleagues. He was an influential member of the Synod of Dort, and a violent opponent of the Remonstrants. He also made it a

Voetius.

[1] All the theological works of Grotius were published in three folio volumes at London, in 1679. His annotations, with a life of the author, are contained in the first two volumes. They also appear in the Critici Sacri.

great work of his life to oppose the Cartesian philosophy. But his methods of procedure tended to cultivate a narrow and dogmatic spirit, and his exegesis, accordingly, aimed rather to support and defend a theological system than to ascertain by valid reason the exact meaning of the sacred writers. He was vehemently polemical, and became the acknowledged head and leader of a school of exegesis which assumed to adhere strictly to the literal sense, but, at the same time, regarded all biblical criticism as highly dangerous to the orthodox faith. The Voetians would fain have made the dogmas of the Synod of Dort the authoritative guide to the sense of Scripture, and were restless before an appeal to the original texts of the Bible and independent methods of interpretation.

Cocceius.

The great opponent both of scholasticism and of a narrow dogmatical exegesis was John Cocceius, a man of broad and thorough scholarship, an adept in Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and rabbinical literature, and a worthy compeer of such scholars as Buxtorf, Walton, and Grotius. He devoted himself chiefly to biblical exposition, publishing commentary after commentary until he had gone through nearly all canonical books.[1] Although his labours revived and encouraged allegorical and mystical methods of interpretation, it must be conceded that he exhibited many of the very best qualities of a biblical exegete, and did as much as any man of his time to hold up the Holy Scriptures as the living fountain of all revealed theology, and the only authoritative rule and standard of faith. He insisted that the Old and New Testaments must be treated as one organic whole, and that each passage should be interpreted according to the meaning of its words, the connexion of thought as traceable through an entire discourse, book, or epistle, and the analogy of faith, or scope and plan of the one complete revelation of God. He maintained that Christ is the great subject of divine revelation in the Old Testament as well as in the New, and hence arose the saying that Cocceius found Christ everywhere in the Old Testament, but Grotius nowhere. It is due, however, to the memory of Cocceius to say that while he too often pressed the typical import of Old Testament texts to an undue extreme, he acted on the valid principle that the Hebrew Scriptures contain the germs of the Gospel revelation, and that, according to the express teaching of our Lord (John v, 39; Luke xxiv, 27), the Old Testament contained many things concerning himself. The errors into which he fell are less grave than those of not a few modern critics who exhibit a notable onesidedness in failing to see that the written revelation of

[1] The works of Cocceius were published at Amsterdam, 1676–78, in 8 vols. folio, and in 1701 in 10 vols. folio.

God is truly an organic whole, and that the New Testament cannot be interpreted without the Old, nor the Old without the New.

A fresh impulse was given to biblical studies in Germany by the founding of the University of Halle in 1694. This was due mainly to the influence of Spener, the father of Pietism. The Protestant Churches had fallen into a cold, formal orthodoxy, and the symbols and sacraments took precedence of scriptural knowledge and personal piety. As early as 1675 Spener had urged, in his Pia Desideria, that all Christian doctrine should be sought in a faithful study of the Holy Scriptures rather than in the symbols of the Church, and that the living truths of God's word should be brought home to the hearts of the people. Associated with him at Halle was A. H. Francke, who had previously become noted at Leipsic by his exegetical lectures. Both these men were eminent as preachers and abundant in pulpit ministrations. Francke's exegetical lectures extended over the books of the Old and New Testaments, and he published treatises on the interpretation of Scripture, and on methods of theological study. These noble leaders of Pietism maintained that it is the first duty of the theologian to ascertain the true meaning of the Scriptures, not from traditional beliefs, but from a critical and grammatical study of the original texts.

Spener.

Francke.

During the eighteenth century biblical criticism and interpretation took on a more scientific character. It was a period of research, of philosophical investigation, of sceptical and rationalistic assaults upon Christianity, of extensive revival and of political revolution. These exciting movements gave encouragement to biblical studies, developed an array of distinguished scholars too numerous to be even named in these pages, and prepared the way for the exact grammatico-historical interpretation which is yielding rich and varied products in our own time. The science of Textual Criticism was promoted by the labours of Van der Hooght, J. H. Michaelis, Houbigant, Kennicott, and De Rossi on the Old Testament, and by those of Mill, Bentley, Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach on the New. Bengel's best work, however, was his Gnomon of the New Testament, a condensed but remarkably rich and suggestive commentary, the general principles and methods of which have not been greatly excelled by any later exegete.

Probably the most distinguished name in the history of exegesis in the eighteenth century is that of John Augustus Ernesti, whose Institutio interpretis Novi Testamenti (Lipz., 1761), or Principles of New Testament Interpretation, has been accepted as a standard textbook on hermeneutics by four gen-

Ernesti.

erations of biblical scholars. "He is regarded," says Hagenbach, "as the founder of a new exegetical school, whose principle simply was that the Bible must be rigidly explained according to its own language, and, in this explanation, it must neither be bribed by any external authority of the Church, nor by our own feeling, nor by a sportive and allegorizing fancy—which had frequently been the case with the mystics—nor, finally, by any philosophical system whatever. He here united in the main with Hugo Grotius, who had laid down similar principles in the seventeenth century. Ernesti was a philologian. He had occupied himself just as enthusiastically with the ancient classics of Rome and Greece as with the Bible, and claimed that the same exegetical laws should be observed in the one case as in the other. He was perfectly right in this respect; even the Reformers wished the same thing. His error here was, perhaps, in overlooking too much the fact that, in order to perceive the religious truths of the Scriptures, we must not only understand the meaning of a declaration in its relations to language and history, but that we must also spiritually appropriate it by feelingly transposing ourselves to it, and by seeking to understand it from itself. Who will deny that, in order to understand the epistles of the Apostle Paul, we must adopt from the very outset a mode of view different from that which we would employ in order to understand the epistles of Cicero, since the circle of ideas of these two men is very different? Religious writings can be perfectly understood only by an anticipating spirit, which peers through the logical and grammatical web of the thoughts to the depths below. . . . The principle that we must expound the Scriptures like every other book could at least be so misapprehended that it might be placed in the same rank with the other writings of antiquity, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which is the only guide to the depths of the Scriptures, be regarded as superfluous. As for Ernesti personally, he was orthodox, like Michaelis and Mosheim. He even defended the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper. And yet these men, and others of like character, are distinguished from their orthodox predecessors by their insisting upon independence, by struggling for sobriety, and, if you will allow, for dryness also. But, with all this, they were further distinguished from their predecessors by a certain freedom and mildness of judgment which men had not been accustomed to find in theologians. Without any desire or wish on their own part they effected a transition to a new theological method of thought, which soon passed beyond the limits of their own labours."[1]

[1] History of the Church in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, vol. i, pp. 259–261. English translation by Hurst. New York, 1869.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century there was in Germany a notable reaction against the old rigid orthodoxy which had been dominant, and also against the degenerating Pietism, which was given to magnify a blind emotional faith, and rapidly deteriorated into a superstitious mysticism and extravagance. Semler contributed greatly to this movement by his theory of Accommodation, applied to the interpretation of Scripture. His beautiful piety, however, preserved him from the evil effects of his own theories, and he was surprised at the use others made of his critical principles. There were men in Germany who were thoroughly infected with the leaven of English deism and French infidelity, and they were not slow to appropriate Semler's destructive methods for the propagation of unbelief among the people. Of this class were Edelmann and Bahrdt, whose writings breathed the most offensive spirit of hostility to all accepted Christian doctrine. The publication of the Wolfenbüttel Fragments (1765–92), by Lessing, contributed still more to the spread of scepticism. They extolled the deists, glorified human beings, and treated the miracles of the Bible as incredible myths and legends, which an intelligent age ought to reject. And so, at the beginning of our present century, rationalism had wellnigh taken possession of the best minds of Germany. It has continued its work of destructive criticism even to our day, and such names as J. G. Eichhorn, Paulus, Tuch, Von Bohlen, Strauss, C. H. Weisse, and F. C. Baur have given peculiar brilliancy to its methods. Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen have in the most recent times exhibited great ingenuity and scholarship in their essays to reconstruct the very foundation of Old Testament history, and place the writings of Moses after those of the prophets.

German Rationalism.

This destructive school of Rationalism has been to a great extent opposed by what is often called the mediation school of interpreters. The man who more than any other initiated a reaction against the rationalism current at the beginning of this century was Schleiermacher. And yet he was far from orthodox in his teaching. He was neither strictly evangelical nor rationalistic, but combined elements of both. He showed that vital piety is a matter of the heart, and consists in the consciousness of God in the soul, and, accordingly, is not attainable by reason, or dependent on human culture. But in his methods of interpretation, he followed mainly the ways of the rationalists. He treated the Old Testament as having no divine authority, but as historically important because of its relations to Christianity. His disciples branched off into different schools, and in their attitude toward evangelical doctrine were negative or positive, or followed a middle course be-

Mediation School.

tween the two, and each school could appeal in defence of its positions to the teachings of the master whom they all honoured. As exegetes, De Wette, Lücke, the Rosenmüllers, Gesenius, and Ewald carried out the rationalistic tendencies of Schleiermacher. De Wette, however, deserves special notice as being unsurpassed in critical tact and exegetical ability by any biblical scholar of modern times. His views were formed under the influence of such theological teachers as Paulus, and are essentially rationalistic, but he rejected the naturalistic method of explaining miracles, and anticipated Strauss in many of the prominent positions of the mythical interpretation. But he showed greater regard for the religious element of Scripture, and never indulged in disrespectful insinuations hostile to its divine authority.

Evangelical Schools.

The German evangelical school of interpreters includes men of different shades of opinion, from the rigidly orthodox to divines of a free critical spirit, intent, like Neander, to know and maintain only essential truth. G. C. Storr, at the beginning of the century, was the leading representative of what is known as the old Tübingen school. He aimed to check the growth of rationalism by a purely scriptural teaching, but his method was unscientific in that he failed to give due prominence to the organic unity of the Bible, and rested too largely on isolated texts. Hengstenberg, professor of theology at Berlin, was recognized for almost half a century as one of the staunchest defenders of orthodoxy, but his tone and methods were highly dogmatic. Hävernick, Bleek, Umbreit, Tholuck, Stier, H. Olshausen, Keil, Delitzsch, Meyer, and Lange represent the better class of the evangelical interpreters, and their varied contributions to exegetical theology are worthy of the very highest commendation.

Biblical exegesis in America.

American scholarship has as yet produced comparatively little that bears favourable comparison with the great exegetical works of British and German authors. But the translators of Lange's Commentary, nearly all Americans, have exhibited therein an exegetical ability quite equal to those of the original writers, and, in some of the volumes, the additions made by the translators are the most valuable parts of the work. In the earlier part of this century Moses Stuart and Edward Robinson did more than any other two men in the United States to promote an interest in exegetical studies. The former published commentaries on Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Daniel, Romans, Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, all of which show the skill of a master, and have maintained, up to the present time, a place among the very ablest expositions of these books. But Robinson's contributions to biblical literature were even

more profound and valuable than those of Stuart. His translation of Wahl's Clavis Philologica was superseded by his own Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, a work that has had incalculable influence in directing the studies of theological students and ministers, and only now gives place to the admirable Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, prepared by J. H. Thayer, another American scholar.

It is noticeable that the best modern American exegesis, while not less thorough and painstaking than that of Europe, is more conservative and evangelical. There is less tendency to speculate and build up theories and hypotheses. The intense utilitarianism of American life has doubtless begotten some measure of superficialness in scholarship as well as in other things, but it has also exerted a most valuable influence in preserving the theologians of the country from the wild and useless extremes of speculation, to which not a few in other lands have been carried away.

Modern Exegesis.

It would require a large volume to describe even briefly the contributions to biblical interpretation which have been made within the last half-century. The breadth and thoroughness of biblical scholarship at the present time may be inferred from the fact that there are hundreds of modern expositors, little known and read, who are far superior in learning and methods of interpretation to any of the fathers or mediæval writers. We mention with highest regard such names as Alford and Ellicott and Lightfoot of England, and Stuart and Edward Robinson and J. A. Alexander, of America; and yet we should remember that there are scores of exegetes now living who easily rank with these. The historical importance of Philo and Origen and Chrysostom and Jerome makes them much more conspicuous than these later writers, but the intrinsic value of the expositions of Scripture produced by the moderns is immeasurably superior to those of the ancients. The rationalistic critics have done great service to the science of interpretation. The suggestions of Semler, the productions of Gesenius, the critical acuteness of De Wette and Ewald, and even the works of Strauss, and Baur, and Graf, and Kuenen, have given an impulse to the scientific study of the Holy Scriptures which has already produced inestimable gain, and which promises even better for the future. For scholarly and critical assaults upon their faith have only driven the friends of evangelical religion to a deeper and better study of their sacred books. The most accomplished scholars of the world are finding in the study and elucidation of the Bible a worthy and ennobling field of labour, and are devoting their lives to it with enthusiastic delight.

CHAPTER IV.

METHODS OF INTERPRETATION.

The history of biblical exposition, as traceable in the works of the great exegetes and critics, shows us what diverse methods of interpretation have at various periods prevailed. Doubtless through all these centuries the common sense of readers has accepted the obvious import of the principal portions of the Bible. For, as Stuart observes, "from the first moment that one human being addressed another by the use of language down to the present hour, the essential laws of interpretation became, and have continued to be, a practical matter. The person addressed has always been an *interpreter* in every instance where he has heard and understood what was addressed to him. All the human race, therefore, are, and ever have been, interpreters. It is a law of their rational, intelligent, communicative nature."[1] Erroneous and absurd methods of explanation are mostly traceable to false notions of the Bible itself. On the one hand we find a superstitious reverence for the letter of Scripture, prompting to search for hidden treasures of thought in every word; on the other, prejudices and assumptions hostile to the spirit of the holy writings have begotten methods of interpretation which pervert, and often flatly contradict, the plainest statements of Scripture.

Halachic and Hagadic Methods.

The ancient Jewish expositions of the Old Testament exhibit numerous absurd methods of interpretation. For example, the letters of a word were reduced to their numerical value, and then some other word or statement was sought having the same letters in another order, or other letters aggregating the same numerical value, and the two words were thereupon regarded as equivalent in meaning. The numerical value of the letters in the name Eliezer (אליעזר) is three hundred and eighteen, the number of Abraham's trained men (Gen. xiv, 14), from which it was inferred that Abraham's servant Eliezer was alone as powerful as the three hundred others. And so, by ingenious manipulation, every peculiar grammatical form, every instance of pleonasm, or ellipsis, or apparently superflous use of a particle, was made to yield some remarkable significance. It is easy to see that such capricious

[1] Article by Professor M. Stuart, in the American Biblical Repository for Jan., 1832, p. 125.

methods must necessarily involve the exposition of the Scriptures in utter confusion; and yet the learned rabbies who employed them sought by these means to show the manifold excellence and wisdom of their sacred books. The study of the ancient Jewish exegesis is, acordingly, of little value in ascertaining the true meaning of the Scriptures. The methods of procedure are fanciful and arbitrary and encourage the pernicious habit of searching the oracles of God for something that will minister to a morbid curiosity. But for the illustration of ancient Jewish opinions, especially for the elucidation of certain doctrines and customs, and sometimes for the criticism of the Hebrew text, the comments of the rabbinical writers may be of much service.

Allegorical interpretation.

The allegorical method of interpretation obtained an early prominence among the Jews of Alexandria. Its origin is usually attributed to the mingling of Greek philosophy and the biblical conceptions of God. Many of the theophanies and anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament were repugnant to the philosophic mind, and hence the effort to discover behind the outer form an inner substance of truth. The biblical narratives were often treated like the Greek myths, and explained as either a historical or an enigmatical embodiment of moral and religious lessons. The most distinguished representative of Jewish allegorical interpretation was Philo of Alexandria, and an example of his allegorizing many be seen in the following remarks on the rivers of Eden (Gen. ii, 10–14):

> In these words Moses intends to sketch out the particular virtues. And they, also, are four in number, prudence, temperance, courage, and justice. Now the greatest river, from which the four branches flow off, is generic virtue, which we have already called goodness; and the four branches are the same number of virtues. Generic virtue, therefore, derives its beginning from Eden, which is the wisdom of God; which rejoices, and exults, and triumphs, being delighted at and honoured on account of nothing else, except its Father, God. And the four particular virtues are branches from the generic virtue, which, like a river, waters all the good actions of each with an abundant stream of benefits.[1]

Similar allegorizing abounds in the early Christian fathers. Thus, Clement of Alexandria, commenting on the Mosaic prohibition of eating the swine, the hawk, the eagle, and the raven, observes: "The sow is the emblem of voluptuous and unclean lust of food. . . . The eagle indicates robbery, the hawk injustice, and the raven greed." On Exod. xv, 1, "Jehovah has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider has he thrown into the sea," Clement remarks:

[1] The Allegories of the Sacred Laws, book i, 19 (Bohn's edition).

The many-limbed and brutal affection, lust, with the rider mounted, who gives the reins to pleasures, he casts into the sea—throwing them away into the disorders of the world. Thus, also, Plato, in his book on the soul [Timæus], says that the charioteer and the horse that ran off—(the irrational part, which is divided into two, into anger and concupiscence)—fall down; and so the myth intimates that it was through the licentiousness of the steeds that Phaëthon was thrown out.[1]

The allegorical method of interpretation is based upon a profound reverence for the Scriptures, and a desire to exhibit their manifold depths of wisdom. But it will be noticed at once that its habit is to disregard the common signification of words, and give wing to all manner of fanciful speculation. It does not draw out the legitimate meaning of an author's language, but foists into it whatever the whim or fancy of an interpreter may desire. As a system, therefore, it puts itself beyond all well-defined principles and laws.

Mystical interpretation.

Closely allied to the allegorical interpretation is the Mystical,[2] according to which manifold depths and shades of meaning are sought in every word of Scripture. The allegorical interpreters have, accordingly, very naturally run into much that is to be classed with mystical theorizing. Clement of Alexandria maintained that the laws of Moses contain a fourfold significance, the natural, the mystical, the moral, and the prophetical. Origen held that, as man's nature consists of body, soul, and spirit, so the Scriptures have a corresponding threefold sense, the bodily (*σωματικός*), or literal, the psychical (*ψυχικός*), or moral, and the spiritual (*πνευματικός*), which latter he further distinguishes as allegorical, tropological, and anagogical. In the early part of the ninth century the learned Rhabanus Maurus recommended four methods of exposition, the historical, the allegorical, the anagogical, and the tropological. He observes:

By these the mother Wisdom feeds the sons of her adoption. Upon youth and those of tender age she bestows drink, in the milk of history; on such as have made proficiency in faith, food, in the bread of allegory; to the good, such as strenuously labour in good works, she gives a satisfying portion in the savoury nourishment of tropology. To those, in fine, who have raised themselves above the common level of humanity by a contempt of earthly things, and have advanced to the highest by heavenly desires, she gives the sober intoxication of theoretic contemplation in the wine of anagogy. . . . History, which narrates examples of perfect men,

[1] Miscellanies, book v, chap. viii.

[2] According to Ernesti, the mystical interpretation differs from the allegorical, as among the Greeks *θεωρία* differs from *ἀλληγορία*. Institutes, chap. ix, 3.

excites the reader to imitate their sanctity; allegory excites him to know the truth in the revelation of faith; tropology encourages him to the love of virtue by improving the morals; and anagogy promotes the longing after eternal happiness by revealing everlasting joys. . . . Since then, it appears that these four modes of understanding the Holy Scriptures unveil all the secret things in them, we should consider when they are to be understood according to one of them only, when according to two, when according to three, and when according to all the four together.[1]

Among the mystical interpreters we may also place the celebrated Emanuel Swedenborg, who maintains a threefold sense of Scripture, according to what he calls "the Science of Correspondencies." As there are three heavens, a lowest, a middle, and a highest, so there are three senses of the Word, the natural or literal, the spiritual, and the celestial. He says: Swedenborgian interpretation.

> The Word in the letter is like a casket, where lie in order precious stones, pearls, and diadems; and when a man esteems the Word holy, and reads it for the sake of the uses of life, the thoughts of his mind are, comparatively, like one who holds such a cabinet in his hand, and sends it heavenward; and it is opened in its ascent, and the precious things therein come to the angels, who are deeply delighted with seeing and examining them. This delight of the angels is communicated to the man, and makes consociation, and also a communication of perceptions.[2]

He explains the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" (Exod. xx, 13), first, in its natural sense, as forbidding murder and also the cherishing of hatred and revenge; secondly, in the spiritual sense, as forbidding "to act the devil and destroy a man's soul;" and thirdly, in the celestial or heavenly sense, the angels understand killing to signify hating the Lord and the Word.

Somewhat allied to the mystical is that Pietistic mode of exposition, according to which the interpreter claims to be guided by an "inward light," received as "an unction from the Holy One" (1 John ii, 20). The rules of grammar and the common meaning and usage of words are discarded, and the internal Light of the Spirit is held to be the abiding and infallible Revealer. Some of the later Pietists of Germany, and the Quakers of England and America have been especially given to this mode of handling the Scriptures.[3] It is certainly to be supposed that Pietistic interpretation.

[1] From Maurus, Allegoriae in Universam Sacram Scripturam, as given in Davidson, Hermeneutics, pp. 165, 166.

[2] The True Christian Religion, chap. iv, 6.

[3] From pietistic extravagance we of course except such men as Spener and A. H. Francke, the great leaders of what is known as Pietism in Germany. The noble practical character of their work and teaching saved them from the excesses into which most of those run who are commonly called Pietists. "The principal efforts of the

this holy inward light would never contradict itself, or guide its followers into different expositions of the same scripture. But the divergent and irreconcilable interpretations prevalent among the adherents of this system show that the "inward light" is untrustworthy. Like the allegorical and mystical systems of interpretation, Pietism concedes the sanctity of the Scriptures, and seeks in them the lessons of eternal life; but as to principles and rules of exegesis it is more lawless and irrational. The Allegorist professes to follow certain analogies and correspondencies, but the Quaker-Pietist is a law unto himself, and his own subjective feeling or fancy is the end of controversy. He sets himself up as a new oracle, and while assuming to follow the written word of God, puts forth his own *dictum* as a further revelation. Such a procedure, of course, can never commend itself to the common sense and the rational judgment.

Accommodation Theory.

A method of exposition, which owes its distinction to the celebrated J. S. Semler, the father of the destructive school of German Rationalism, is known as the Accommodation Theory. According to this theory the Scripture teachings respecting miracles, vicarious and expiatory sacrifice, the resurrection, eternal judgment, and the existence of angels and demons, are to be regarded as an accommodation to the superstitious notions, prejudices, and ignorance of the times. The supernatural was thus set aside. Semler became possessed with the idea that we must distinguish between religion and theology, and between personal piety and the public teaching of the Church. He rejected the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and argued that, as the Old Testament was written for the Jews, whose religious notions were narrow and faulty, we cannot accept its teachings as a general rule of faith. Matthew's Gospel, he held, was intended for Jews outside of Palestine, and John's Gospel for Christians who had more or less of Grecian culture. Paul at first adapted himself to Jewish modes of thought with the hope of winning over many of his countrymen to Christianity, but failing in this, he turned to the Gentiles, and became pre-eminent in holding up Christianity as the religion for all men. The different books of Scripture were, accordingly, designed to serve only a temporary

Pietists," says Immer, "were directed toward the edificatory application of Scripture, as may be seen from Francke's Manuductio ad Lectionem Scripturae Sacrae. This predominance of effort at edification soon degenerated into indifference to science, and at last into proud contempt of it. Mystical and typological trifling arose; chiliastic phantasies found great acceptance; the Scriptures were not so much explained as overwhelmed with pious reflections." Hermeneutics, p. 46.

purpose, and many of their statements may be summarily set aside as untrue.

The fatal objection to this method of interpretation is that it necessarily impugns the veracity and honour of the sacred writers, and of the Son of God himself. It represents them as conniving at the errors and ignorance of men, and confirming them and the readers of the Scriptures in such ignorance and error. If such a principle be admitted into our expositions of the Bible, we at once lose our moorings, and drift out upon an open sea of conjecture and uncertainty.

A passing notice should also be taken of what is commonly called the Moral Interpretation, and which owes its origin to the celebrated philosopher of Königsberg, Immanuel Kant. The prominence given to the pure reason, and the idealism maintained in his metaphysical system, naturally led to the practice of making the Scriptures bend to the preconceived demands of reason. For, although the whole Scripture be given by inspiration of God, it has for its practical value and purpose the moral improvement of man. Hence, if the literal and historical sense of a given passage yield no profitable moral lesson, such as commends itself to the practical reason, we are at liberty to set it aside, and attach to the words such a meaning as is compatible with the religion of reason. It is maintained that such expositions are not to be charged with insincerity, inasmuch as they are not to be set forth as the meaning strictly intended by the sacred writers, but only as a meaning which the writers may possibly have intended.[1] The only real value of the Scriptures is to illustrate and confirm the religion of reason.

Moral Interpretation of Kant.

It is easy to see that such a system of interpretation, which professedly ignores the grammatical and historical sense of the Bible, can have no reliable or self-consistent rules. Like the mystical and allegorical methods, it leaves every thing subject to the peculiar faith or fancy of the interpreter.

So open to criticism and objection are all the above-mentioned methods of interpretation, that we need not be surprised to find them offset by other extremes. Of all rationalistic theories the

[1] See Kant, Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft, p. 161. This "was the work of his old age, and at all periods of his life he seems to have been at least as deficient in religious sentiment as in emotional imagination, which is allied to it. . . . It treats the revelations of Scripture in regard to the fall of man, to his redemption, and to his restoration, as a moral allegory, the data of which are supplied by the consciousness of depravity, and of dereliction from the strict principles of duty. It is Strauss in the germ." M'Clintock and Strong's Cyclopædia, article Kant.

Naturalistic Interpretation.

Naturalistic is the most violent and radical. A rigid application of this theory is exhibited in Paulus' Commentary on the New Testament,[1] in which it is maintained that the biblical critic should always distinguish between what is fact and what is mere opinion. He accepts the historical truth of the Gospel narratives, but holds that the mode of accounting for them is a matter of opinion. He rejects all supernatural agency in human affairs, and explains the miracles of Jesus either as acts of kindness, or exhibitions of medical skill, or illustrations of personal sagacity and tact, recorded in a manner peculiar to the age and opinions of the different writers. Jesus' walking on the sea was really a walking on the shore; but the boat was all the time so near the shore, that when Peter jumped into the sea Jesus could reach and rescue him from the shore. The excitement was so great, and the impression on the disciples so deep, that it seemed to them as if Jesus had miraculously walked on the sea, and come to their help. The apparent miracle of making five loaves feed five thousand people was done simply by the example, which Jesus bade his disciples set, of distributing of their own little store to those immediately about them. This example was promptly followed by other companies, and it was found that there was more than sufficient food for all. Lazarus did not really die, but fell into a swoon, and was supposed to be dead. But Jesus suspected the real state of the case, and coming to the tomb at the opportune moment, happily found that his suspicions were correct; and his wisdom and power in the case made a profound and lasting impression.

This style of exposition, however, was soon seen to set at naught the rational laws of human speech, and to undermine the credibility of all ancient history. It exposed the sacred books to all manner of ridicule and satire, and only for a little time awakened any considerable interest.

The Mythical Theory.

The Naturalistic method of interpretation was followed by the Mythical. Its most distinguished representative was David Friedrich Strauss, whose Life of Jesus (Das Leben Jesu), first published in 1835, created a profound sensation in the Christian world. The Mythical theory, as developed and rigidly carried out by Strauss, was a logical and self-consistent application to biblical exposition of the Hegelian (pantheistic) doctrine that the idea of God and of the absolute is neither shot forth miraculously, nor revealed in the individual, but developed in the consciousness of humanity. According to Strauss, the Messianic idea was gradually developed in the expectations and yearnings of the Jewish

[1] Philologisch-kritischer und historischer Commentar über das neue Testament. 4 vols. 1800–1804.

nation, and at the time Jesus appeared it was ripening into full maturity. The Christ was to spring from the line of David, be born at Bethlehem, be a prophet like Moses, and speak words of infallible wisdom. His age should be full of signs and wonders. The eyes of the blind should be opened, the ears of the deaf should be unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb should sing. Amid these hopes and expectations Jesus arose, an Israelite of remarkable beauty and force of character, who, by his personal excellence and wise discourse, made an overwhelming impression upon his immediate friends and followers. After his decease, his disciples not only yielded to the conviction that he must have risen from the dead, but began at once to associate with him all their Messianic ideals. Their argument was: "Such and such things must have pertained to the Christ; Jesus was the Christ; therefore such and such things happened to him."[1] The visit of the wise men from the East was suggested by Balaam's prophecy of the "star out of Jacob" (Num. xxiv, 17). The flight of the holy family into Egypt was worked up out of Moses' flight into Midian; and the slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem out of Pharaoh's order to destroy every male among the infant Israelites of Egypt. The miraculous feeding of the five thousand with a few loaves of bread was appropriated from the Old Testament story of the manna. The transfiguration in the high mountain apart was drawn from the accounts of Moses and Elijah in the mount of God. In short, Christ did not institute the Christian Church, and send forth his gospel, as narrated in the New Testament; rather, the Christ of the Gospels was the mythical creation of the early Church. Adoring enthusiasts clothed the memory of the man Jesus with all that could enhance his name and character as the Messiah of the world. But what is fact and what is fiction must be determined by critical analysis. Sometimes it may be impossible to draw the dividing line.

Strauss' criteria of myths.

Among the criteria by which we are to distinguish the mythical, Strauss instances the following: A narrative is not historical (1) when its statements are irreconcilable with the known and universal laws which govern the course of events; (2) when it is inconsistent with itself or with other accounts of the same thing; (3) when the actors converse in poetry or elevated discourse unsuitable to their training and situation; (4) when the essential substance and groundwork of a reported occurrence is either inconceivable in itself, or is in striking harmony with some Messianic idea of the Jews of that age.[2]

[1] See Life of Jesus, Introduction, § 14.

[2] Ibid., Introduction, § 16.

We need not here enter upon a detailed exposure of the fallacies of this mythical theory. It is sufficient to observe, on the four critical rules enumerated above, that the first dogmatically denies the possibility of miracles; the second (especially as used by Strauss) virtually assumes, that when two accounts disagree, both must be false! the third is worthless until it is clearly shown what is suitable or unsuitable in each given case; and the fourth, when reduced to the last analysis, will be found to be simply an appeal to one's subjective notions. To these considerations we add that the Gospel portraiture of Jesus is notably unlike the prevalent Jewish conception of the Messiah at that time. It is too perfect and marvellous to have been the product of any human fancy. Myths arise only in unhistoric ages, and a long time after the persons or events they represent, whereas Jesus lived and wrought his wonderful works in a most critical period of Greek and Roman civilization. Furthermore, the New Testament writings were published too soon after the actual appearance of Jesus to embody such a mythical development as Strauss assumes. While attempting to show how the Church spontaneously originated the Christ of the gospels, this whole theory fails to show any sufficient cause or explanation of the origin of the Church and of Christianity itself. The mythical interpretation, after half a century of learned labours, has notably failed to commend itself to the judgment of Christian scholars, and has few advocates at the present time.

Other rationalistic methods.

The four last-named methods of interpretation may all be designated as Rationalistic; but under this name we may also place some other methods which agree with the naturalistic, the mythical, the moral, and the accommodation theories, in denying the supernatural element in the Bible. The peculiar methods by which F. C. Baur, Renan, Schenkel, and other rationalistic critics have attempted to portray the life of Jesus, and to account for the origin of the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, often involve correspondingly peculiar principles of interpretation. All these writers, however, proceed with assumptions which virtually beg the questions at issue between the naturalist and the supernaturalist. But they all conspicuously differ among themselves. Baur rejects the mythical theory of Strauss, and finds the origin of many of the New Testament writings in the Petrine and Pauline factions of the early Church. These factions arose over the question of abolishing the Old Testament ceremonial and the rite of circumcision. The Acts of the Apostles is regarded as the monument of a pacification between these rival parties, effected in the early part of the second century. The book is treated as large-

ly a fiction, in which the author, a disciple of Paul, represents Peter as the first to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and exhibits Paul as conforming to divers Jewish customs, thus securing a reconciliation between the Pauline and Petrine Christians.[1] Renan, on the other hand, maintains a legendary theory of the origin of the gospels, and attributes the miracles of Jesus, like the marvels of mediæval saints, partly to the blind adoration and enthusiasm of his followers, and partly to pious fraud. Schenkel essays to make the life and character of Christ intelligible by stripping it of the divine and the miraculous, and presenting him as a mere man.

Against all these rationalistic theories it is obvious to remark that they exclude and destroy each other. Strauss exploded the naturalistic method of Paulus, and Baur shows that the mythical theory of Strauss is untenable. Renan pronounces against the theories of Baur, and exposes the glaring fallacy of making the Petrine and Pauline factions account for the origin of the New Testament books, and the books account for the factions. Renan's own methods of criticism appear to be utterly lawless, and his light and captious remarks have led many of his readers to feel that he is destitute of any serious or sacred convictions, and that he would readily make use of furtive means to gain his end. He is continually foisting into the Scriptures meanings of his own, and making the writers say what was probably never in their thoughts. He assumes, for instance, as a teaching of Jesus, that the rich man was sent to Hades because he was rich, and Lazarus was glorified because he was a pauper. Many of his interpretations are based upon the most unwarrantable assumptions, and are unworthy of any serious attempt at refutation. The logical issue lies far back of his exegesis, in the fundamental questions of a personal God and an overruling providence.

Exegesis controlled by speculative philosophy.

The development of speculative philosophy through Kant, Jacobi, Herbart, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel has exerted a profound influence upon the critical minds of Germany, and has affected the exegetical style and methods of many of the great biblical scholars of the nineteenth century. This philosophy has tended to make the German mind intensely subjective, and has led not a few theologians to view both history and doctrines in relation to some preconceived theory rather than in their practical bearings on human life. Thus, the critical methods of Reuss, Kuenen, and Wellhausen, in their treatment of Old Testament litera-

[1] Several notions of the Tübingen critical school, represented by Baur, may be found in substance among the teachings of Semler, the author of this destructive species of criticism.

ture, seem based, not so much on a candid examination of all the contents of the sacred books of Israel, as upon the application of a philosophy of human history to the books. A dispassionate study of the works of these critics begets a conviction that the detailed arguments, by which they aim to support their positions, are not the real steps of the process by which their conclusions were first reached. The various assaults upon the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch have been noticeably a succession of adjustments. One critical theory has given place to another, as in the assaults on the credibility of the gospels, and the methods employed are largely of the nature of special pleading to maintain a preconceived theory. Reuss tells us in the Preface of his great work on the History of the Jewish Scriptures that his point of view is not that of biblical history, but one inferred from a comparison of the legal codes, and, beginning with an "intuition," he aimed "to find the Ariadne thread which would lead out of the labyrinth of current hypotheses of the origin of the Mosaic and other Old Testament books into the light of a psychologically intelligible course of development for the Israelitish people.[1] His procedure is, accordingly, an ingenious attempt to make his philosophy of history in general account for the records of Israel's history, and, so far from interpreting the written records according to legitimate principles, he rearranges them according to his own fancy, and virtually constructs a new history conspicuously inconsistent with the obvious import of the ancient records.

Apologetic and Dogmatic methods.

Sceptical and rationalistic assaults upon the Scriptures have called out a method of interpretation which may be called Apologetic. It assumes to defend at all hazards the authenticity, genuineness, and credibility of every document incorporated in the sacred canon, and its standpoint and methods are so akin to that of the Dogmatic exposition of the Bible that we present the two together. The objectionable feature of these methods is that they virtually set out with the ostensible purpose of maintaining a preconceived hypothesis. The hypothesis may be right, but the procedure is always liable to mislead. It presents the constant temptation to *find* desired meanings in words, and ignore the scope and general purpose of the writer. There are cases where it is well to assume an hypothesis, and to use it as a means of investigation; but in all such cases the hypothesis is only assumed tentatively, not affirmed dogmatically. In the exposition of the Bible, apology and dogma have a legitimate place. The true apology defends the sacred books against an unreasonable and cap-

[1] Die Geschichte der heiligen Schriften des Alten Testament, p. viii. Braunschweig, 1881.

tious criticism, and presents their claims to be regarded as the revelation of God. But this can be done only by pursuing rational methods, and by the use of a convincing logic. So also the Scriptures are profitable for dogma, but the dogma must be shown to be a legitimate teaching of the Scripture, not a traditional idea attached to the Scripture. The extermination of the Canaanites, the immolation of Jephthah's daughter, the polygamy of the Old Testament saints, and their complicity with slavery, are capable of rational explanation, and, in that sense, of a valid apology. The true apologist will not attempt to justify the cruelties of the ancient wars, or hold that Israel had a legal right to Canaan; he will not seek to evade the obvious import of language, and maintain that Jephthah's daughter was not offered at all, but became a Jewish nun; nor will he find it necessary to defend the Old Testament practice of polygamy, or of slavery. He will let facts and statements stand in their own light, but guard against false inferences, and rash conclusions. So also the doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the vicarious atonement, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and the resurrection, have a firm foundation in the Scriptures; but how unscientific and objectionable many of the methods by which these and other doctrines have been maintained! When a theologian assumes the standpoint of an ecclesiastical creed, and thence proceeds, with a polemic air, to search for single texts of Scripture favourable to himself or unfavourable to his opponent, he is more than likely to overdo the matter. His creed may be as true as the Bible itself, but his method is reprehensible. Witness the disputes of Luther and Zwingle over the matter of consubstantiation. Read the polemic literature of the Antinomian, the Calvinistic, and the Sacramentarian controversies. The whole Bible is ransacked and treated as if it were an atomical collection of dogmatic proof-texts. How hard is it, even at this day, for the polemic divine to concede the spuriousness of 1 John v, 7. It should be remembered that no apology is sound, and no doctrine sure, which rests upon uncritical methods, or proceeds upon dogmatical assumptions. Such procedures are not exposition, but imposition. Moreover, the habit of treating the views of others with contempt, or of declaring what this passage *must* mean, and what that *cannot possibly* signify, is not adapted to command the confidence of students who think for themselves. Hengstenberg and Ewald represented two opposite extremes of opinion, but the imperious and offensive dogmatism of their writings has detracted largely from the influence of their otherwise invaluable contributions to biblical literature.

Grammatico-Historical Interpretation.

In distinction from all the above-mentioned methods of interpretation, we may name the Grammatico-Historical as the method which most fully commends itself to the judgment and conscience of Christian scholars. Its fundamental principle is to gather from the Scriptures themselves the precise meaning which the writers intended to convey. It applies to the sacred books the same principles, the same grammatical process and exercise of common sense and reason, which we apply to other books. The grammatico-historical exegete, furnished with suitable qualifications, intellectual, educational, and moral,[1] will accept the claims of the Bible without prejudice or adverse prepossession, and, with no ambition to prove them true or false, will investigate the language and import of each book with fearless independence. He will master the language of the writer, the particular dialect which he used, and his peculiar style and manner of expression. He will inquire into the circumstances under which he wrote, the manners and customs of his age, and the purpose or object which he had in view. He has a right to assume that no sensible author will be knowingly inconsistent with himself, or seek to bewilder and mislead his readers.

[1] Compare pp. 23–30 on the Qualifications of an Interpreter.

PART FIRST.

GENERAL HERMENEUTICS.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

THERE are certain general principles of thought and language which underlie all intelligible writings. When one rational mind desires to communicate thought to another it employs such conventional means of intercourse as are supposed to be understood by both. Words of defined meaning and usage serve this purpose in all the languages of men, and accordingly, if one understand the written thoughts of another, he must know the meaning and usage of his words. It is the province of interpretation to observe the methods and laws of human thought as exhibited in the ordinary processes of speech. "The perfect understanding of a discourse," says Schleiermacher, "is a work of art, and involves the need of an art-doctrine, which we designate by the term Hermeneutics. Such an art-doctrine has existence only in so far as the precepts admitted form a system resting upon principles which are immediately evident from the nature of thought and language."[1]

General principles defined.

In general, therefore, we hold that the Bible, as a body of literature, is to be interpreted like all other books. The writers of the several parts and those who assume to explain what is written are alike supposed to be in accord with the logical operations of the human mind. The first work of the interpreter is accordingly philological. He should know the primary signification of each word, the manner of its usage, and the peculiar shades of meaning it may have acquired. With the study of words he must also unite a knowledge of the genius and grammatical structure of the language employed, for thus only can one come into possession of the precise thoughts of an author, and judge of their adaptation to impress the first readers. The main object of an author in writing is also to be diligently sought, for in the light of his chief purpose the details of his composition are often more

Bible to be interpreted like other books.

[1] Outline of the Study of Theology, p. 142. Edinb., 1850.

clearly apprehended. Along with the scope of a book the form of its structure is also to be studied, and the logical relation of its several parts discerned. A wide comparison of all related books, or of similar passages of writing, is invaluable, and hence the comparison of one Scripture with another may often serve to set the whole in clearest light. Especially important is it for the exegete to transfer himself in spirit to the times of an ancient writer, learn the circumstances under which he wrote, and look out upon the world from his point of view.

Importance of general principles.

These general principles are applicable alike to the interpretation of the Bible and of all other books, and are appropriately designated General Hermeneutics. Such principles are of the nature of comprehensive and fundamental doctrines. They become to the practical interpreter so many maxims, postulates, and settled rules. He holds them in mind as axioms, and applies them in all his expositions with uniform consistency. For it is evident that a false principle admitted into the method of an interpreter will vitiate his entire exegetical process. And when, for example, we find that in the explanation of certain parts of the Scriptures no two interpreters out of a whole class agree, we have good reason to presume at once that some fatal error lurks in their principles of interpretation. It was surely no purpose or desire of the sacred writers to be misunderstood. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that the Holy Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is of the nature of a puzzle designed to exercise the ingenuity of the reader. It is to be expected, therefore, that sound hermeneutical principles will serve as elements of safety and satisfaction in the study of God's written word.

Ennobling tendency of hermeneutical study.

The process of observing the laws of thought and language, as exhibited in the Holy Scriptures, is an ennobling study. It affords an edifying intercourse with eminent and choice spirits of the past, and compels us for the time to lose sight of temporary interests, and to become absorbed with the thoughts and feelings of other ages. He who forms the habit of studying, not only the divine thoughts of revelation, but also the principles and methods according to which those thoughts have been expressed, will acquire a moral and intellectual culture worthy of the noblest ambition.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRIMARY MEANING OF WORDS.

It is interesting and profitable to observe how new languages originate; how they become modified and changed; how new dialects arise, and how, at length, a national form of speech may go out of use and become known as a dead language. Attention to these facts makes it apparent that any given language is an accumulation and aggregate of words which a nation or community of people use for the interchange and expression of their thoughts. "Language," says Whitney, "has, in fact, no existence save in the minds and mouths of those who use it; it is made up of separate articulated signs of thought, each of which is attached by a mental association to the idea it represents, is uttered by voluntary effort, and has its value and currency only by the agreement of speakers and hearers. It is in their power, subject to their will."[1]

Words practically the elements of language.

To understand, therefore, the language of a speaker or writer, it is necessary, first of all, to know the meaning of his words. The interpreter, especially, needs to keep in mind the difference, so frequently apparent, between the primitive signification of a word and that which it subsequently obtains. We first naturally inquire after the original meaning of a word, or what is commonly called its etymology. Next we examine the *usus loquendi*, or actual meaning which it bears in common usage; and then we are prepared to understand the occasion and import of synonymes, and how a language becomes enriched by them.

Etymology, *usus loquendi*, and synonymes.

Whatever may be the common meaning of a word, as used by a particular people or age, it often represents a history. Language has been significantly characterized as fossil poetry, fossil history, fossil ethics, fossil philosophy. "This means," says Trench, "that just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern, or the finely vertebrated lizard, extinct, it may be, for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would have otherwise been theirs, so in words are

Manifold value of etymology.

[1] Language and the Study of Language, p. 35.

beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and feeling of past ages, of men whose very names have perished, preserved and made safe forever."[1] Benjamin W. Dwight declares etymology to be "fossil poetry, philosophy, and history combined. In the treasured words of the past, the very spirits of elder days look out upon us, as from so many crystalline spheres, with friendly recognition. We see in them the light of their eyes; we feel in them the warmth of their hearts. They are relics, they are tokens, and almost break into life again at our touch. The etymologist unites in himself the characteristics of the traveller, roaming through strange and far-off climes; the philosopher, prying into the causes and sequences of things; the antiquary, filling his cabinet with ancient curiosities and wonders; the historiographer, gathering up the records of by-gone men and ages; and the artist, studying the beautiful designs in word architecture furnished him by various nations."[2]

Ἐκκλησία.

Take, for example, that frequently occurring New Testament word *ἐκκλησία*, commonly rendered *church*. Compounded of *ἐκ*, *out of*, and *καλεῖν*, to *call*, or *summon*, it was first used of an assembly of the citizens of a Greek community, summoned together by a crier, for the transaction of business pertaining to the public welfare. The preposition *ἐκ* indicates that it was no motley crowd,[3] no mass-meeting of nondescripts, but a select company gathered *out from* the common mass; it was an assembly of free citizens, possessed of well-understood legal rights and powers. The verb *καλεῖν* denotes that the assembly was legally *called* (compare the *ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ* of Acts xix, 39), summoned for the purpose of deliberating in lawful conclave. Whether the etymological connexion between the Hebrew קָהָל and the Greek *καλεῖν* be vital or merely accidental, the Septuagint translators generally render קָהָל by *ἐκκλησία*, and thus by an obvious process, *ἐκκλησία* came to represent among the Hellenists the Old Testament conception of "the congregation of the people of Israel," as usually denoted by the Hebrew word קָהָל. Hence it was natural for Stephen to speak of the congregation of Israel, which Moses led out of Egypt, as "the *ἐκκλησία* in the wilderness" (Acts vii, 38), and equally natural for the word to become the common designation of the Christian community of converts from Judaism and the world. Into this New Testament sense of the word, it was also important that the full force of *ἐκ* and *καλεῖν* (*κλῆσις*, *κλητός*) should continue.

[1] The Study of Words. Introductory Lecture, p. 12. New York, 1861.

[2] Article on The Science of Etymology, in Bibliotheca Sacra, April, 1858, p. 438.

[3] Compare the *confused assembly*, *ἡ ἐκκλησία συνκεχυμένη*, composed of *the multitude*, *ὁ ὄχλος*, in Acts xix, 32, 33, 40.

As the old Greek assembly was called by a public herald (*κήρυξ*), so "the Church of God (or of the Lord), which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts xx, 28), is the congregation of those who are "called to be saints" (*κλητοῖ ἁγίοι*, Rom. i, 7), "called out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii, 9), called "unto his kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. ii, 12), and called by the voice of an authorized herald or preacher (Rom. x, 14, 15; 1 Tim. ii, 7).[1] With this fundamental idea the church may denote either the small assembly in a private house (Rom. xvi, 5; Philemon 2), the Christian congregations of particular towns and cities (1 Cor. i, 2; 1 Thess. i, 1), or the Church universal (Eph. i, 22; iii, 21). But a new idea is added when our Lord says, "I will build my Church" (Matt. xvi, 18). Here the company of the saints (*κλητοῖ ἁγίοι*) is conceived of as a house, a stately edifice; and it was peculiarly fitting that Peter, the disciple to whom these words were addressed, should afterward write to the general Church, and designate it not only as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation," but also as "a spiritual house," builded of living stones (1 Pet. ii, 5, 9). Paul also uses the same grand image, and speaks of the household of God as "having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, grows unto a living temple in the Lord" (Eph. ii, 20, 21). And then again, to this image of a building (comp. 1 Cor. iii, 9) he also adds that of a living human body of which Christ is the head, defining the whole as "his body, the fulness (*πλήρωμα*) of him who fills all things in all" (Eph. i, 23). Comp. also Rom. xii, 5; 1 Cor. xii, 12–28; and Col. i, 18.

Observe also the forms and derivatives of the Hebrew כָּפַר, *to cover*. The primary meaning is to *cover over*, so as to hide from view. The ark was thus covered or overlaid with a covering of some material like pitch (Gen. vi, 14). Then it came to be used of a flower or shrub, with the resin or powder of which oriental females are said to have covered and stained their finger nails (Cant. i, 14). Again we find it applied to villages or hamlets (1 Sam. vi, 18; 1 Chron. xxvii, 25), apparently, as Gesenius suggests, because such places were regarded as a covering or shelter to the inhabitants. The verb is also used of the abolishing or setting aside of a covenant (Isa. xxviii, 18). But the deeper meaning of the word is that of covering, or hiding sin, and thus making an atonement. Thus Jacob thought to *cover* his brother Esau with a present (Gen. xxxii, 20). His words are, literally, "I will cover his face with the present which goes before

כֹּפֶר, the *covering* of atonement.

[1] A similar interesting history attaches to the words *κήρυξ* and *κηρύσσω*.

me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will lift up my face." Feeling that he had sorely wronged his brother, he would now fain cover his face with such a princely gift that Esau would no more behold those wrongs of the past. His old offences being thus hidden, he hopes to be permitted to see his brother's face in peace; and perhaps even Esau will condescend to lift up his face—raise from the dust the face of the prostrate and penitent Jacob. The transition was easy from this use of the verb to that of *making an atonement*, a meaning which it constantly conveys in the books of the law (Lev. xvii, 11). And hence the use of the noun כֹּפֶר in the sense of *ransom, satisfaction* (Exod. xxx, 12), and the plural כִּפֻּרִים, *atonements* (Exod. xxx, 10; Lev. xxiii, 27, 28). Hence, also, that word of profound significance, כַּפֹּרֶת, *capporeth*, the *mercy-seat*, the lid or cover of the ark which contained the tables of the law (Exod. xxv, 17–22)—the symbol of mercy covering wrath.

Help of comparative philology.

Additional interest is given to the study of words by the science of comparative philology. In tracing a word through a whole family of languages, we note not only the variety of forms it may have taken, but the different usage and shades of meaning it acquired among different peoples. The Hebrew words אָב, *father*, and בֵּן, *son*, are traceable through all the Semitic tongues, and maintain their common signification in all. The Greek word for *heart*, *καρδία*, appears also in the Sanskrit *hrid*, Latin *cor*, Italian *cuore*, Spanish *corázon*, Portuguese, *coraçam*, French *cœur*, and English *core*. Some words, especially verbs, acquire new meanings as they pass from one language to another. Hence the meaning which a word bears in Arabic or Syriac may not be the meaning it was designed to convey in Hebrew. Thus the Hebrew word עָמַד is frequently used in the Old Testament in the sense *to stand*, to *be firm*, to *stand up;* and this general idea can be traced in the corresponding word and its derivatives in the Arabic, Ethiopic (to *erect a column*, to *establish*), Chaldee (to *rise up*), Samaritan and Talmudic; but in the Syriac it is the word commonly used for *baptism*. Some say this was because the candidate stood while he was baptized; others, that the idea associated with baptism was that of *confirming* or *establishing* in the faith; while others believe that the Syriac word is to be traced to a different root. Whatever be the true explanation, it is easy to see that the same word may have different meanings in cognate languages, and, therefore, a signification which appears in Arabic or Syriac may be very remote from that which the word holds in the Hebrew. Hence great caution is necessary in tracing etymologies.

It is well known that, in all languages, the origin of many words has become utterly lost. The wonder, indeed, is that we are able to trace the etymology of such a large proportion. The extensive literature of the Greek language enables the New Testament interpreter to ascertain without much difficulty the roots and usage of most of the words with which he has to deal. But the Old Testament Scriptures embody substantially all the remains of the Hebrew language, and when we meet with a word which occurs but once in the entire literature extant, we may often be puzzled to know the exact meaning which it was intended to convey. In such cases help from cognate tongues is particularly important. The word סֻלָּם, in Gen. xxviii, 12, occurs nowhere else in Hebrew. The root appears to be סָלַל, to *cast up*, to *raise;* and from the same root comes the word מְסִלָּה, used of public *highways* (Judg. xx, 32; Isa. xl, 3; lxii, 10), the *paths* of locusts (Joel ii, 8), the *courses* of the stars (Judg. v, 20), and *terraces* or *stairways* to the temple (2 Chron. ix, 11). The Arabic word *sullum* confirms the sense of *stairway* or *ladder*, and leaves no reasonable doubt as to the meaning of *sullam* in Gen. xxviii, 12. Jacob saw, in his dream, an elevated ladder or stairway reaching from the earth to the heavens. In determining the sense of such *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα*, or words occurring but once, we have to be guided by the context, by analogy of kindred roots, if any appear in the language, by ancient versions of the word in other languages, and by whatever traces of the word may be found in cognate tongues.

Rare words, and *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα.*

One of the most noted of New Testament *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα* is the word *ἐπιούσιον* in the Lord's prayer, Matt. vi, 11; Luke xi, 3. It occurs nowhere else in Greek literature. Two derivations have been urged, one from *ἐπί* and *ἰέναι*, or the participle of *ἔπειμι*, to *go toward* or *approach;* according to which the meaning would be, "give us our *coming* bread," that is, bread for the coming day; to-morrow's bread. This is etymologically possible, and, on the ground of analogy, has much in its favour. But this meaning does not accord with *σήμερον*, *this day*, occurring in the same verse, nor with our Lord's teaching in verse 34 of the same chapter. The other derivation is from *ἐπί* and *οὐσία*, *existence*, *subsistence* (from *εἰμί*, *to be*), and means that which is necessary for existence, "our essential bread." This latter seems by far the more appropriate meaning.

Ἐπιούσιος.

Another difficult word is *πιστικός*, used only in Mark xiv, 3, and John xii, 3, to describe the nard (*νάρδος*) with which Mary anointed the feet of Jesus. It is found in manuscripts of several Greek authors (Plato, Gorgias, 455 a.; Aristotle,

Πιστικός.

Rhet. i, 2) apparently as a false reading for πειστικός, *persuasive;* but this signification would have no relevancy to nard. Scaliger proposed the meaning *pounded nard*, deriving πιστικός from πτίσσω, to *pound*, a possible derivation, but unsupported by any thing analogous. Some think the word may be a proper adjective denoting the place from which the nard came; i. e., *Pistic nard.* The Vulgate of John xii, 3, has *nardi pistici.* This use of the word, however, is altogether uncertain. The Vulgate of Mark xiv, 3, has *spicati*, as denoting the spikes or ears of the nard plant; hence the word *spikenard.* But there is no good ground for accepting this interpretation. Many derive the word from πίνω (or πιπίσκω), to *drink*, and understand *drinkable* or *liquid* nard, and urge that several ancient writers affirm that certain anointing oils were used for drinking. If such were the meaning here, however, the word should refer to the ointment (μύρον), not the nard. The explanation best suited to the context, and not without warrant in Greek usage, makes the word equivalent to πιστός, *faithful, trustworthy;* applied to a material object it would naturally signify *genuine, pure*, that on which one can rely.

In determining the meaning of compound words we may usually resort to the lexical and grammatical analogy of languages. The signification of a compound expression is generally apparent from the import of the different terms of which it is compounded. Thus, the word εἰρηνοποιοί, used in Matt. v, 9, is at once seen to be composed of εἰρήνη, *peace*, and ποιέω, to *make*, and signifies *those who make* (work or establish) *peace.* The meaning, says Meyer, is "not the *peaceful* (εἰρηνικοί, James iii, 17; 2 Macc. v, 25; or εἰρηνεύοντες, Sirach vi, 7), a meaning which does not appear even in Pollux, i, 41, 152 (Augustine thinks of the *moral inner harmony;* De Wette, of the inclination of the contemporaries of Jesus to war and tumult; Bleek reminds us of Jewish party hatred); but *the founders of peace* (Xen. Hist. Gr., vi, 3, 4; Plut. Mor., p. 279 B.; comp. Col. i, 20; Prov. x, 10), who as such minister to God's good pleasure, who is the God of peace (Rom. xvi, 20; 2 Cor. xiii, 11), as Christ himself was the highest founder of peace (Luke ii, 14; John xvi, 33; Eph. ii, 14)."[1] Similarly we judge of the meaning of ἐθελοθρησκεία in Col. ii, 23, compounded of ἐθέλω and θρησκεία, and signifying *will worship, self-chosen worship;* πολύσπλαγχνος, *very compassionate* (James v, 11); συναὐξάνομαι, to *grow together with* (Matt. xiii, 30); τροποφορέω, to *bear as a nourisher* (Acts xiii, 18), and many other compounds, which, like the above, occur but once in the New Testament.

Compound words.

[1] Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Gospel of Matthew, in loco.

CHAPTER III.

THE USUS LOQUENDI.

Some words have a variety of significations, and hence, whatever their primitive meaning, we are obliged to gather from the context, and from familiarity with the usage of the language, the particular sense which they bear in a given passage of Scripture. Many a word in common use has lost its original meaning. How few of those who daily use the word *sincere* are aware that it was originally applied to pure honey, from which all wax was purged. Composed of the Latin words *sine*, without, and *cera*, wax, it appears to have been first used of honey strained or separated from the wax-like comb. The word *cunning* no longer means knowledge, or honourable skill, but is generally used in a bad sense, as implying artful trickery. The verb *let* has come to mean the very opposite of what it once did, namely to *hinder;* and *prevent*, which was formerly used in the sense of *going before*, so as to prepare the way or assist one, now means to intercept or obstruct. Hence the importance of attending to what is commonly called the *usus loquendi*, or current usage of words as employed by a particular writer, or prevalent in a particular age. It often happens, also, that a writer uses a common word in some special and peculiar sense, and then his own definitions must be taken, or the context and scope must be consulted, in order to determine the precise meaning intended.

The meaning of words becomes changed.

There are many ways by which the *usus loquendi* of a writer may be ascertained. The first and simplest is when he himself defines the terms he uses. Thus the word ἄρτιος, *perfect, complete*, occurring only in 2 Tim. iii, 17, is defined by what immediately follows: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." That is, he is made perfect or complete in this, that he is thoroughly furnished and fitted, by the varied uses of the inspired Scripture, to go forward unto the accomplishment of every good work. We also find the word τέλειοι, commonly rendered *perfect*, defined in Heb. v, 14, as those "who by practice have the senses trained unto a discrimination of good and of evil." They are, accordingly, the mature and experienced Christians as distinguished from *babes*, νήπιοι.

Writer often defines his own terms.

Compare verse 13, and 1 Cor. ii, 6. So also, in Rom. ii, 28, 29, the apostle defines the genuine Jew and genuine circumcision as follows: "For he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly (*ἐν τῷ φανερῷ*); nor is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly (*ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ*); and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Immediate context.

But the immediate context, no less than the writer's own definitions, generally serves to exhibit any peculiar usage of words. Thus, *πνεῦμα, wind, spirit*, is used in the New Testament to denote the wind (John iii, 8), the vital breath (Rev. xi, 11), the natural disposition or temper of mind (Luke ix, 55; Gal. vi, 1), the life principle or immortal nature of man (John vi, 63), the perfected spirit of a saint in the heavenly life (Heb. xii, 23), the unclean spirits of demons (Matt. x, 1; Luke iv, 36), and the Holy Spirit of God (John iv, 24; Matt. xxviii, 19; Rom. viii, 9–11). It needs but a simple attention to the context, in any of these passages, to determine the particular sense in which the word is used. In John iii, 8, we note the two different meanings of *πνεῦμα* in one and the same verse. "The wind (*τὸ πνεῦμα*) blows where it will, and the sound of it thou hearest; but thou knowest not whence it comes and whither it goes; so is every one who is born of the Spirit" (*ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος*). Bengel holds, indeed, that we should here render *πνεῦμα* in both instances by spirit, and he urges that the divine Spirit, and not the wind, has a *will* and a *voice*.[1] But the great body of interpreters maintain the common version. Nicodemus was curious and perplexed to know the *how* (*πῶς*, verses 4 and 9) of the Holy Spirit's workings, and as the Almighty of old spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, and appealed to the manifold mysteries of nature in vindication of his ways, so here the Son of God appeals to the mystery in the motion of the wind. "Wouldst thou know the whence and whither of the Spirit, and yet thou knowest not the origin and the end of the common wind? Wherefore dost thou not marvel concerning the air which breathes around thee, and of which thou livest?"[2] "Our Lord," says Alford, "might have chosen any of the mysteries of nature to illustrate the point. He takes that one which is above others symbolic of the action of the Spirit, and which in both languages, that in which he spoke, as well as that in which his speech is reported, is expressed by the same word. So that the words as they stand apply themselves at once to the Spirit and his working, without any figure."[3]

[1] Gnomon of the New Testament, in loco.

[2] Comp. Stier, Words of the Lord Jesus, in loco.

[3] Greek Testament, in loco.

The word *στοιχεῖον*, used in classical Greek for the upright post of a sundial, then for an elementary sound in language (from letters standing in rows), came to be used almost solely in the plural, *τὰ στοιχεῖα*, in the sense of *elements* or *rudiments*. In 2 Pet. iii, 10 it evidently denotes the elements of nature, the component parts of the physical universe; but in Gal. iv, 3, 9, as the immediate context shows, it denotes the ceremonials of Judaism, considered as elementary object lessons, adapted to the capacity of children. In this sense the word may also denote the ceremonial elements in the religious cultus of the heathen world (compare verse 8).[1] The enlightened Christian should grow out of these, and pass beyond them, for otherwise they trammel, and become a system of bondage. Compare also the use of the word in Col. ii, 8, 20 and Heb. v, 12.

In connexion with the immediate context, the nature of the subject may also determine the usage of a word. Thus, in 2 Cor. v, 1, 2, the reference of the words *οἰκία*, *house*, *σκῆνος*, *tabernacle*, *οἰκοδομή*, *building*, and *οἰκητήριον*, *habitation*, to the body as a covering of the soul hardly admits of question. The whole passage (verses 1–4) reads literally thus: "For we know that if our house of the tabernacle upon earth were dissolved, a building from God we have, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For also in this we groan, yearning to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven, since indeed also (*εἴγε καὶ*) being clothed we shall not be found naked. For, indeed, we who are in the tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, to the end that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by the life." Hodge holds that the "building from God" is heaven itself, and argues that in John xiv, 2, heaven is compared to a house of many mansions; in Luke xvi, 9, to a habitation; and in Heb. xi, 10, and Rev. xxi, 10, to a city of dwellings.[2] But the scripture in question is too explicit, and the nature of the subject too limited, to allow other scriptures, like those cited, to determine its meaning. No one doubts that the phrase, "our house of the tabernacle upon earth," refers to the human body, which is liable to dissolution. It is compared to a tent, or tabernacle (*σκῆνος*), and also to a vesture, thus presenting us with a double metaphor. "The word tent," says Stanley, "lent itself to this imagery, from being used in later Greek writers for the human body, especially in medical writers, who seem to have been led to adopt the word from the *skin*-materials

Nature of the subject.

2 Cor. v, 1–4.

[1] Comp. Lightfoot's Commentary on Galatians iv, 11.

[2] Commentary on Second Corinthians, in loco.

of which tents were composed. The explanation of this abrupt transition from the figure of a house or tent to that of a garment, may be found in the image, familiar to the apostle, both from his occupations and his birthplace, of the tent of Cilician haircloth, which might almost equally suggest the idea of a habitation and of a vesture. Compare the same union of metaphors in Psa. civ, 2, 'Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain' (of a tent)."[1]

The main subject, then, is the present body considered as an earthly house, a tabernacle upon earth. In it we groan; in it we are under burden; in it we endure "the momentary lightness of our affliction" (*τὸ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως*), which is mentioned in chapter iv, 17, and which is there set in contrast with an "eternal weight of glory" (*αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης*). To this earthly house, heaven itself, whether considered as the house of many mansions (John xiv, 2) or the city of God (Rev. xxi, 10), affords no true antithesis. The true antithesis is the heavenly body, the vesture of immortality, which is from God. For the opposite of *our house* is the *building from God;* the one may be *dissolved*, the other is *eternal;* the one is *upon earth* (*ἐπίγειος*), the other is (not heaven itself, but) *in the heavens.* The true parallel to the entire passage before us is 1 Cor. xv, 47–54, where the earthly and the heavenly bodies are contrasted, and it is said (ver. 53) "this corruptible must be clothed with incorruption, and this mortal must be clothed with immortality."

Contrast or opposition.

The above example also illustrates how antithesis, contrast, or opposition, may serve to determine the meaning of words. A further instance may be cited from Rom. viii, 5–8. In verse 4 the apostle has introduced the antithetic expressions *κατὰ σάρκα*, and *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, *according to the flesh* and *according to the spirit.* He then proceeds to define, as by contrast, the two characters. "For they who are according to the flesh the things of the flesh do mind (*φρονοῦσιν*, *think of, care for*), but they, according to the spirit, the things of the spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit life and peace. Because the mind of the flesh is enmity toward God, for to the law of God it does not submit itself, for it is not able; and they who are in the flesh are not able to please God." The spirit, throughout this passage, is to be understood of the Holy Spirit: "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," mentioned in verse 2, which delivers the sinner "from the law of sin and of death." The being *according to the flesh*, and the being *in the flesh*, are to be understood of

[1] Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, in loco.

unregenerate and unsanctified human life, conditioned and controlled by carnal principles and motives. This Scripture, and more that might be cited, indicates, by detailed opposition and contrast, the essential and eternal antagonism between sinful carnality and redeemed spirituality in human life and character.

The *usus loquendi* of many words may be seen in the parallelisms of Hebrew poetry. Whether the parallelism be synonymous or antithetic,[1] it may serve to exhibit in an unmistakable way the general import of the terms employed. Take, for example, the following passage from the eighteenth Psalm, verses 6–15 (Heb. 7–16): Hebrew parallelisms.

6 In my distress I call Jehovah,
And to my God I cry;
He hears from his sanctuary my voice,
And my cry before him comes into his ears.
7 Then shakes and quakes the land,
And the foundations of the mountains tremble,
And they shake themselves, for he was angry.
8 There went up a smoke in his nostril,
And fire from his mouth devours;
Hot coals glowed from him.
9 And he bows the heavens and comes down,
And a dense gloom under his feet;
10 And he rides upon a cherub, and flies,
And soars upon the wings of the wind.
11 He sets darkness his covering,
His pavilion round about him,
A darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.
12 From the brightness before him his thick clouds passed away,
Hail, and hot coals of fire.
13 Then Jehovah thunders in the heavens,
And the Most High gives forth his voice,
Hail, and hot coals of fire.
14 And he sends forth his arrows and scatters them,
And lightnings he shot, and puts them in commotion.
15 And the beds of the waters are seen,
And the foundations of the world are uncovered,
From thy rebuke, O Jehovah!
From the breath of the wind of thy nostril.

It requires but little attention here to observe how such words as *call*, *cry*, *he hears my voice*, and *my cry comes into his ears* (verse 6), mutually explain and illustrate one another. The same may be said of the words *shakes*, *quakes*, *tremble*, and *shake themselves*, in

[1] On Hebrew Parallelisms, see pp. 149, 152.

verse 7; *smoke*, *fire*, and *coals* in verse 8; *rides*, *flies*, and *soars* in verse 10; *arrows* and *lightnings*, *scatters* and *puts in commotion*, in verse 14; and so to some extent of the varied expressions of nearly every verse.

Subject, predicate, and adjuncts.

Here, too, may be seen how subject and predicate serve to explain one another. Thus, in verse 8, above, *smoke goes up*, *fire devours*, *hot coals glow*. So in Matt. v, 13: "if the salt become tasteless," the sense of the verb μωρανθῇ, *become tasteless*, is determined by the subject ἅλας, *salt*. But in Rom. i, 22, the import of this same verb is *to become foolish*, as the whole sentence shows: "Professing to be wise, they become foolish," i. e., made fools of themselves. The word is used in a similar signification in 1 Cor. i, 20: "Did not God make foolish the wisdom of the world?" The extent to which qualifying words, as adjectives and adverbs, serve to limit or define the meaning is too apparent to call for special illustration.

Comparison of parallel passages.

A further and most important method of ascertaining the *usus loquendi* is an extensive and careful comparison of similar or parallel passages of Scripture. When a writer has treated a given subject in different parts of his writings, or when different writers have treated the same subject, it is both justice to the writers, and important in interpretation, to collate and compare all that is written. The obscure or doubtful passages are to be explained by what is plain and simple. A subject may be only incidentally noticed in one place, but be treated with extensive fulness in another. Thus, in Rom. xiii, 12, we have the exhortation, "Let us put on the armour of light," set forth merely in contrast with "cast off the works of darkness;" but if we inquire into the meaning of this "armour of light," how much more fully and forcibly does it impress us when we compare the detailed description given in Ephesians vi, 13–17: "Take up the whole armour of God. . . . Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Compare also 1 Thess. v, 8.

The meaning of the word אָנוּשׁ (compare the Greek *νόσος*) in Jer. xvii, 9, must be determined by ascertaining its use in other passages. The common version translates it "desperately wicked," but usage does not sustain this meaning. The primary sense of the word appears to be *incurably sick*, or *diseased*. It is used in

2 Sam. xii, 15, to describe the condition of David's child when smitten of the Lord so that it *became very sick* (יָאְנַשׁ). It is used in reference to the lamentable idolatry of the kingdom of Israel (Micah i, 9), where the common version renders, "Her wound is *incurable*," and gives in the margin, "She is grievously sick of her wounds." The same signification appears also in Job xxxiv, 6: "My wound (חִצִּי, wound caused by an arrow) is incurable." In Isa. xvii, 11, we have the thought of "incurable pain," and in Jer. xv, 18, we read, "Wherefore has my pain been enduring, and my stroke incurable?" Compare also Jer. xxx, 12, 15. In Jer. xvii, 16, the prophet uses this word to characterize the day of grievous calamity as *a day of mortal sickness* (יוֹם אֲנוּשׁ). In the ninth verse, therefore, of the same chapter, where the deceitful heart is characterized by this word, which everywhere else maintains its original sense of a *diseased and incurable condition*, we should also adhere to the main idea made manifest by all these parallels: "Deceitful is the heart above every thing; and *incurably diseased* is it; who knows it?[1]

The *usus loquendi* of common words is, of course, to be ascertained by the manner and the connection in which they are generally used. We feel at once the incongruity of saying, "Adriansz or Lippersheim discovered the telescope, and Harvey invented the circulation of the blood." We know from familiar usage that *discover* applies to the finding out or uncovering of that which was in existence before, but was hidden from our view or knowledge, while the word *invent* is applicable to the contriving and constructing of something which had no actual existence before. Thus, the astronomer invents a telescope, and by its aid discovers the motions of the stars. The passage in 1 Cor. xiv, 34, 35, has been wrested to mean something else than the prohibition of women's speaking in the public assemblies of churches. Some have assumed that the words *churches* and *church* in these verses are to be understood of the business meetings of the Christians, in which it was not proper for the women to take part. But the entire context shows that the apostle has especially in mind the worshipping assembly. Others have sought in the word λαλεῖν a peculiar sense, and, finding that it bears in classic Greek writers the meaning of *babble*, *prattle*, they have strangely taught that Paul means to say: "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted them to *babble*. . . . For it is a shame for a woman to *babble* in church!" A slight examination shows that in this same chapter the word λαλεῖν, *to speak*, occurs

General and familiar usage.

[1] On the importance of comparing parallel passages, see further in Chapter vii.

more than twenty times, and in no instance is there any necessity or reason to understand it in other than its ordinary sense of *discoursing, speaking*. Who, for instance, would accuse Paul of saying, "I thank God, I *babble* with tongues more than ye all" (verse 18); or "let two or three of the prophets *babble*, and the others judge" (verse 29)? Hence appears the necessity, in interpretation, of observing the general usage rather than the etymology of words.

Ancient versions.

In ascertaining the meaning of rare words, *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα*, or words which occur but once, and words of doubtful import, the ancient versions of Scripture furnish an important aid. For, as Davidson well observes, "An interpreter cannot arrive at the right meaning of every part of the Bible by the Bible itself. Many portions are dark and ambiguous. Even in discovering the correct sense, no less than in defending the truth, other means are needed. Numerous passages will be absolutely unintelligible without such helps as lie out of the Scriptures. The usages of the Hebrew and Hebrew-Greek languages cannot be fully known by their existing remains.[1]

In the elucidation of difficult words and phrases the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament holds the first rank among the ancient versions. It antedates all existing Hebrew manuscripts; and parts of it, especially the Pentateuch, belong, without much doubt, to the third century before the Christian era. Philo and Josephus appear to have made more use of it than they did of the Hebrew original; the Hellenistic Jews used it in their synagogues, and the New Testament writers frequently quote from it. Being made by Jewish scholars, it serves to show how before the time of Christ the Jews interpreted their Scriptures. Next in importance to the Septuagint is the Vulgate, or Latin Version, largely prepared in its present form by St. Jerome, who derived much knowledge and assistance from the Jews of his time. After these we place the Peshito-Syriac Version, the Targums, or Chaldee Paraphrases of the Old Testament, especially that of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Prophets, and the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.[2] The other ancient versions, such as the Arabic, Coptic, Æthiopic, Armenian, and Gothic, are of less value, and, in determining the meaning of rare words, cannot be relied on as having any considerable weight or authority.

[1] Hermeneutics, page 616.

[2] On the history and character of all these ancient versions, see Harman's, Keil's, or Bleek's "Introduction;" also the various biblical dictionaries and cyclopædias.

A study and comparison of these ancient versions will show that they often differ very widely. In many instances it is easy to see, in the light of modern researches, that the old translators fell into grave errors, and were often at a loss to determine the meaning of rare and doubtful words. When the context, parallel passages, and several of the versions agree in giving the same signification to a word, that signification may generally be relied upon as the true one. But when the word is an *ἅπαξ λεγόμενον*, and the passage has no parallel, and the versions vary, great caution is necessary lest we allow too much authority to one or more versions, which, after all, may have been only conjectural.

The old versions often differ.

The following examples will illustrate the use, and the interest attaching to the study, of the ancient versions. In the Authorized English Version of Gen. i, 2, the words תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ are translated, *without form and void.* The Targum of Onkelos has צַדְיָא וְרִיקָנְיָא, *waste and empty;* the Vulgate: *inanis et vacua, empty and void;* Aquila: *κένωμα καὶ οὐδέν, emptiness and nothing.* Thus, all these versions substantially agree, and the meaning of the Hebrew words is now allowed to be *desolation and emptiness.* The Syriac merely repeats the Hebrew words, but the Septuagint reads *ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, invisible and unformed,* and cannot be allowed to set aside the meaning presented in all the other versions.

In Gen. xlix, 6, the Septuagint gives the more correct translation of עִקְּרוּ שׁוֹר, *they houghed an ox, ἐνευροκόπησαν ταῦρον*; but the Chaldee, Syriac, Vulgate, Aquila, and Symmachus read, like the Authorized Version, *they digged down a wall.* Here, however, the authority of versions is outweighed by the fact that, in all other passages where the Piel of this word occurs, it means to *hamstring* or *hough* an animal. Compare Josh. xi, 6, 9; 2 Sam. viii, 4; 1 Chron. xviii, 4. Where the *usus loquendi* can thus be determined from the language itself, it has more weight than the testimony of many versions.

The versions also differ in the rendering of עַצֶּבֶת in Psa. xvi, 4. This word elsewhere (Job ix, 28; Psa. cxlvii, 3; Prov. x, 10; xv, 13) always means *sorrow;* but the form עָצָב means *idols,* and the Chaldee, Symmachus, and Theodotion so render עַצֶּבֶת in Psa. xvi, 4: *they multiply their idols,* or *many are their idols.* But the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Aquila, render the word *sorrows,* and this meaning is best sustained by the usage of the language.

In Cant. ii, 12, עֵת הַזָּמִיר is rendered by the Septuagint *καιρὸς τῆς τομῆς, time of the cutting;* Symmachus, *time of the pruning* (*κλα-

δενδρεως); so also the Vulgate, *tempus putationis*. Most modern interpreters, however, discard these ancient versions here, and understand the words to mean, *the time of song is come;* not merely or particularly *the singing of birds*, as the English version, but all the glad songs of springtime, in which shepherds and husbandmen alike rejoice. In this interpretation they are governed by the consideration that זְמִיר and זְמִירוֹת signify *song* and *songs* in 2 Sam. xxiii, 1; Job xxxv, 10; Psa. xcv, 2; cxix, 54; Isa. xxiv, 16; xxv, 5, and that when "the blossoms have been seen in the land" the pruning time is altogether past.

In Isa. lii, 13 all the ancient versions except the Chaldee render the word יַשְׂכִּיל in the sense of *acting wisely*. This fact gives great weight to that interpretation of the word, and it ought not to be set aside by the testimony of one version, and by the opinion, which is open to question, that יַשְׂכִּיל is in some passages equivalent to הִצְלִיחַ, to *prosper*.

From the above examples it may be seen what judgment and caution are necessary in the use of the ancient versions of the Bible. In fact, no specific rules can safely be laid down to govern us in the use of them. Sometimes the etymology of a word, or the context, or a parallel passage may have more weight than all the versions combined; while in other instances the reverse may be true. Where the versions are conflicting, the context and the analogy of the language must generally be allowed to take the precedence.

Glossaries and scholia.

In ascertaining the meaning of many Greek words the ancient glossaries of Hesychius, Suidas, Photius, and others are useful; but as they treat very few of the obscure words of the New Testament, they are of comparatively little value to the biblical interpreter. Scholia, or brief critical notes on portions of the New Testament, extracted chiefly from the writings of the Greek Fathers, such as Origen and Chrysostom, occasionally serve a good purpose,[1] but they have been superseded by the more thorough and scholarly researches of modern times, and the results of this research are embodied in the leading critical commentaries and biblical lexicons of the present day. The Rabbinical commentaries of Aben-Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Tanchum are often found serviceable in the exposition of the Old Testament.

[1] The commentaries of Theodoret and Theophylact are largely composed of extracts from Chrysostom. To the same class belong the commentaries of Euthymius, Zigabenus, Œcumenius, Andreas, and Arethas. The Catenae of the Greek Fathers by Procopius, Olympiodorus, and Nicephorus treat several books of the Old Testament. The celebrated Catena Aurea of Thomas Aquinas covers the Four Gospels, and was translated and published at Oxford in 1845 by J. H. Newman.

CHAPTER IV.

SYNONYMES.

Words, being the conventional signs and representatives of ideas, are changeable in both form and meaning by reason of the changes constantly taking place in human society. In process of time the same word will be applied to a variety of uses, and come to have a variety of meanings. Thus, the name *board*, another form of the word *broad*, was originally applied to a piece of timber, hewed or sawed so as to form a wide, thin plank. It was also applied to a table on which food was placed, and it became common to speak of gathering around the festive *board*. Thence it came by a natural process to be applied to the food which was placed upon the table, and men were said to work or pay for their *board*. By a similar association the word was also applied to a body of men who were wont to gather around a table to transact business, and hence we have *board* of trustees, *board* of commissioners. The word is also used for the deck of a vessel; hence the terms *on board*, *overboard*, and some other less common nautical expressions. Thus it often happens, that the original meaning of a word falls into disuse, and is forgotten, while later meanings become current, and find a multitude and variety of applications. But while a single word may thus come to have many meanings, it also happens that a number of different words are used to designate the same, or nearly the same, thing. By such a multiplication of terms a language becomes greatly enriched, and capable of expressing more minutely the different shades and aspects of any particular idea. Thus in English we have the words *wonder*, *surprise*, *admiration*, *astonishment*, and *amazement*, all conveying the same general thought, but distinguishable by different shades of meaning. The same is true of the words *axiom*, *maxim*, *aphorism*, *apothegm*, *adage*, *proverb*, *byword*, *saying*, and *saw*. Such words are called synonymes, and they abound in all cultivated languages. The biblical interpreter needs discernment and skill to determine the nice distinctions and shades of meaning attaching to Hebrew and Greek synonymes. Often the exact point and pith of a passage will be missed by failing to make the proper discrimination between synonymous expressions. There

Some words have many meanings.

Several words of like meaning.

are, for instance, eleven different Hebrew words used in the Old Testament for *kindling a fire*, or *setting on fire*,[1] and seven Greek words used in the New Testament for *prayer*;[2] and yet a careful study of these several terms will show that they all vary somewhat in signification, and serve to set forth so many different shades of thought or meaning.

Hebrew words for putting to death.

We take, for illustration, the different Hebrew words which are used to convey the general idea of *killing*, or *putting to death*. The verb קָטַל occurs but three times in the Hebrew Scriptures, and means in every case to kill by putting an end to one's existence. The three instances are the following: Job xiii, 15, "If he *kill* me," or "Lo, let him kill me;" and Job xxiv, 14, "At light will the murderer rise up; he will *kill* the poor and needy;" and Psa. cxxxix, 19, "Thou wilt *kill* the wicked, O God." The primary idea of the word, according to Gesenius, is that of *cutting;* hence cutting off; making an end of by destruction. So the noun קֶטֶל is used in Obadiah 9 in connexion with כָּרַת, *cut* off—"shall be cut off by *slaughter;*" i. e., by a general destruction. In the Chaldee chapters of Daniel the verb קְטַל is used in a variety of forms seven times, but it seems to retain in every instance essentially the same meaning as the Hebrew verb. The simple fact of the *killing* or *cutting* off is stated without any necessary implication as to the method or occasion of the act.

קָטַל

The word more commonly used to denote *putting to death* is (the Hiphil, Hophal, and some of the rarer forms of) מוּת, to *die*. The grammatical structure of the language enables us at once to perceive that the primary idea in the use of this word is that of *causing to die*. Thus, in Josh. x, 26 and xi, 17, it is used to denote the result of violent smiting (נָכָה): "Joshua smote them and *caused them to die;*" "All their kings he took, and he smote them and *caused them to die.*" Compare 1 Sam. xvii, 50; xxii, 18; 2 Sam. xviii, 15; 2 Kings xv, 10, 14. In short, the distinguishing idea of this word, as used for *killing*, is that of putting to death, or causing to die, by some violent and deadly measure. In this sense the word is used in the Old Testament Scriptures over two hundred times. The prominent thought in קָטַל is merely that of *cutting off;* getting one out of the way; while in הֲמִית and הוּמַת the idea of *death*, as the result of some fatal means and procedure, is more noticeable. The murderer or the assassin *kills* (קָטַל) his victim or enemy; the warrior, the ruler, and the Lord himself, *causes to die*, or *puts to death* (הֲמִית) whom he will, and he

הֲמִית
הוּמַת

[1] Namely: שׁרף, קטר, קדח, נשׁק, להט, יקד, יצת, חרה, דלק, בער, אור.

[2] Εὐχή, *προσευχή, δέησις, ἔντευξις, εὐχαριστία, αἴτημα*, and *ἱκετηρία.*

performs the act by some certain means (specified or unspecified), which will accomplish the desired result. The latter word is accordingly used of public executions, the slaughter involved in war, and the putting to death for the maintenance of some principle, or the attainment of some ulterior end. It is never used to express the idea of murder; but God himself says: "I put to death" (Deut. xxxii, 39). Compare 1 Sam. ii, 6; 2 Kings v, 7; Hosea ix, 16.

Another word for *killing* is הָרַג. Unlike הָמִית, it may be used for private homicide, or murder (Gen. iv, 8; xxvii, 41), or assassination (2 Chron. xxiv, 25; 2 Kings x, 9), or general slaughter and massacre (Judges viii, 17; Esther ix, 15). The slaying it denotes may be done by the sword (1 Kings ii, 32), or by a stone (Judges ix, 54), or a spear (2 Sam. xxiii, 21), or by the word of Jehovah (Hos. vi, 5), or even by grief, or a viper's tongue (Job v, 2; xx, 16). But the characterizing idea of the word, as distinguished from הָמִית and קָטַל, seems to be that of *wholesale* or *vengeful slaughter*. Thus Jehovah *slew* all the firstborn of Egypt (Exod. xiii, 15), but the slaughter was a vengeful judgment-stroke, a plague. Thus Simeon and Levi *slew* the men of Shechem, and that slaughter was a cruel and vindictive massacre (Gen. xxxiv, 26; xlix, 6). This word is used of the slaughter of Jehovah's prophets by Jezebel, and of the prophets of Baal by Elijah (1 Kings xix, 1, 10), and in this sense generally, whether the numbers slain be few or many. Compare Judges viii, 17, 21; Esther ix, 6, 10, 12; Ezek. ix, 6. In Isa. xxii, 13 the word is used of the slaughter of oxen, but the context shows that the slaughter contemplated was on a large scale, at a time of feasting and revelry. So, again, in Psa. lxxviii, 47, we read: "He *slays* with hail their vines," but the passage is poetical, and the thought is that of a sweeping destruction, by which vines and trees, as well as other things that suffered in the plagues of Egypt, were, so to speak, slaughtered.

הָרַג

רָצַח has the primary signification of *crushing*, a violent breaking in pieces, and is generally used to denote the *act of murder* or *manslaughter* in any degree. This is the word used in the commandment, "Thou shalt not *commit murder*" (Exod. xx, 13; Deut. v, 17); less properly translated, "Thou shalt not *kill*," for often *to kill* is not necessarily *to murder*. In Num. xxxv the participial form of the word is used over a dozen times to denote the *manslayer*, who flees to a city of refuge, and twice (verses 27, 30) the verb is used to denote the execution of such manslayer by the avenger of blood.

רָצַח

The word טָבַח is used for the *slaying of animals*, especially in preparation for a feast. It corresponds more nearly with the word *butcher*. Thus, when Joseph's brethren came, bringing Benjamin with them, Joseph commanded the ruler of his house to bring the men to the house, and *kill a killing* (טְבֹחַ טֶבַח, Gen. xliii, 16). Compare 1 Sam. xxv, 11; Prov. ix, 2. When the word is applied to the slaughter of men it is always with the idea that they are slaughtered or butchered like so many animals (Psa. xxxvii, 14; Jer. li, 40; Lam. ii, 21; Ezek. xxi, 10, (15).

טָבַח

A kindred word is זָבַח, used of the *sacrificing of animals for offerings*. It is thus ever associated with the idea of *immolation*, and the derivative noun זֶבַח means a *sacrificial offering* to God. "This verb," says Gesenius, "is not used of the priests as slaughtering victims in sacrifice, but of private persons offering sacrifices at their own cost." Compare Gen. xxxi, 54; Exod. viii, 29, (25); 1 Sam. xi, 15; 2 Chron. vii, 4; xxxiii, 17; Ezek. xx, 28; Hos. xiii, 2; Jon. i, 16.

זָבַח

Another word, constantly used in connection with the killing of animals for sacrifice, is שָׁחַט; but it differs from זָבַח especially in this, that the latter emphasizes rather the idea of *sacrifice*, while שָׁחַט points more directly to the *slaughter* of the victim. Hence זָבַח is often used intransitively, in the sense of *offering sacrifice*, without specifying the object sacrificed; but שָׁחַט is always transitive, and connected with the object slain. This latter word is often applied to the slaying of persons (Gen. xxii, 10; 1 Kings xviii, 40; 2 Kings x, 7, 14; Isa. lvii, 5; Ezek. xvi, 21), but in a sacrificial sense, as the immediate context shows. Judg. xii, 6, would seem to be an exception, but the probable thought there is that the Ephraimites who could not pronounce the "Shibboleth" were slain as so many human sacrifices.

שָׁחַט

Thus each of these seven Hebrew words, all of which involve the idea of *killing* or *slaughter*, has its own distinct shade of meaning and manner of usage.

The Hebrew language has twelve different words to express the idea of *sin*. First, there is the verb חָטָא, which, like the Greek ἁμαρτάνω, means, primarily, *to miss* a mark, and is so used (in Hiphil) in Judg. xx, 16, where mention is made of seven hundred left handed Benjamites who could sling stones "to the hair, and not *miss*." In Prov. viii, 36, it is contrasted with מָצָא, to *find* (verse 35): "They that *find* me, find life; . . . and he that *misses* me wrongs his soul." Compare also Prov. xix, 2: "He that hastens with his feet *misses*;" that is, makes a misstep; gets off the track. The exact meaning

Hebrew words for Sin.

חָטָא

in Job v, 24, is more doubtful: "Thou shalt visit thy pasture (or habitation), and shalt not *miss*." The sense, according to most interpreters, is: Thou shalt miss nothing; in visiting thy pasture and thy flocks thou shalt find nothing gone; no sheep or cattle missing. It is easy to see how the idea of making a misstep, or missing a mark, passed over into the moral idea of missing some divinely appointed mark; hence *failure, error, shortcoming*, an action that has miscarried. Accordingly, the noun חַטָּא means *fault, error, sin*. It is interesting to note how the Piel, or intensive form of the verb חָטָא, conveys the idea of *making an offering for sin* (compare Lev. vi, 26, (19); ix, 15), or *cleansing* by some ceremonial of atonement (Exod. xxix, 36; Lev. xiv, 52); as if the thought of bearing the penalty of sin, and making it appear loathsome and damnable, were to be made conspicuous by an intense effort to purge away its guilt and shame. Hence arose the common usage of the noun חַטָּאת in the sense of *sin offering*.

עָוֹן, עָוֶל, and אָוֶן

We should next compare the words עָוֹן, עָוֶל, and אָוֶן. The first is from the root עָוָה, to *twist*, to *make crooked*, to *distort*, and signifies *moral perversity*. In the English version it is commonly translated *iniquity*. It indicates the inherent badness of a perverted soul, and in Psa. xxxii, 5, we have the expression: Thou hast taken away the *iniquity* (עֲוֹן) of my *sin*" (חַטָּאתִי). Closely cognate with עָוֹן is עָוֶל, from the root עָוַל, to *turn away*, to *distort*, and would seem to differ from it in usage by being applied rather to *outward action* than to *inner character;* עָוֹן indicates specially what a sinner *is*, עָוֶל, what he *does*. The primary sense of אָוֶן, on the other hand, is *emptiness*, or *nothingness*. It is used of idolatry (1 Sam. xv, 23; Isa. xli, 29; lxvi, 3; Hos. x, 5, 8; Zech. x, 2), and in the English version is occasionally translated *vanity* (Job xv, 35; Psa. x, 7; Prov. xxii, 8). It denotes wickedness, or sin, as something that has no enduring reality or value. It is a false, vain appearance; a deceitful shadow, destitute of stability. So, then, in these three words we have suggested to us bad character, bad action, and the emptiness of sinful pursuits.

רַע

The word which especially denotes *evil*, or that which is essentially *bad*, is רַע, with its cognate רֹעַ and רָעָה, all from the root רָעַע, to *break, shatter, crush, crumble*. It indicates a character or quality which, for all useful or valuable purposes, is utterly *broken* and *ruined*. Thus the noun רֹעַ, in Gen. xli, 19, denotes the utter *badness* of the seven famine-smitten heifers of Pharaoh's dream, and is frequently used of the wickedness of wrong action (Deut. xxviii, 20; Psa. xxviii, 4; Isa. i, 16; Jer. xxiii, 2; xliv, 22; Hos. ix, 15). The words רַע and רָעָה, besides being frequently

employed in the same sense (compare Gen. vi, 5; viii, 21; 1 Kings ii, 44; Jer. vii, 12, 24; Zech. i, 4; Mal. ii, 17), are also used to denote the *evil* or *harm* which one may do to another (Psa. xv, 3; xxi, 11; xxxv, 4; lxxi, 13). In all the uses of this word the idea of a *ruin* or a *breach* is in some way traceable. The wickedness of one's heart is in the moral *wreck* or *ruin* it discloses. The evil of a sinner's wicked action is a *breach* of moral order.

מַעַל

Another aspect of sinfulness is brought out in the word מָעַל and its noun מַעַל. It is usually translated *trespass*, but the fundamental thought is *treachery*, some covert and faithless action. Thus it is used of the unfaithfulness of an adulterous woman toward her husband (Num. v, 12), of the taking strange wives (Ezra x, 2, 10), of the offense of Achan (Josh. vii, 1; xxii, 20; 1 Chron. ii, 7), and generally of unfaithfulness toward God (Deut. xxxii, 51; Josh. xxii, 16; 2 Chron. xxix, 6; Ezek. xx, 27; xxxix, 23). By this word any transgression is depicted as a plotting of treachery, or an exhibition of unfaithfulness to some holy covenant or bond.

עָמָל

By a transposition of the first two letters of מעל we have the word עָמָל, which is used of the exhaustive *toils* of mortal life and their attendant *sorrow* and *misery*. In Num. xxiii, 21, and Isa. x, 1, it is coupled in parallelism with אָוֶן, *emptiness*, *vanity*, and may be regarded as the accompaniment of the vain pursuits of men. It is that *labour*, which, in the book of Ecclesiastes, where the word occurs thirty-four times, is shown both to begin and end in "vanity and vexation of spirit;" a striving after the wind (Eccles. i, 14; ii, 11, 17, 19).

עָבַר

The word עָבַר, to *cross over*, like the Greek *παραβαίνω*, is often used metaphorically of *passing over the line of moral obligation*, or going aside from it. Hence it corresponds closely with the word *transgress*. In Josh. vii, 11, 15; Judg. ii. 20; 2 Kings xviii, 12; Hos. vi, 7; viii, 1, it is used of transgressing a covenant; in Deut. xxvi, 13, of a commandment; in 1 Sam. xv, 24, of the word (lit., *mouth*) of Jehovah; and in Isa. xxiv, 5, of the law. Thus words of counsel and warning, covenants, commandments, laws, may be *crossed over*, *passed by*, *walked away from*; and this is the peculiar aspect of human perversity which is designated by the word עָבַר, to *transgress*.

פֶּשַׁע and רֶשַׁע

The two words פֶּשַׁע and רֶשַׁע may be best considered together. The former conveys the idea of *revolt*, *rebellion*; the latter *disturbance*, *tumultuous rage*. The former word is used, in 1 Kings xii, 19, of Israel's revolt from the house of David; and in 2 Kings i, 1; iii, 7; viii, 20, 22; 2 Chron. xxi, 10, of the

rebellions of Moab, Edom, and Libnah; and the noun פֶּשַׁע, which is usually rendered *transgression*, should always be understood as a fault or trespass considered as a revolt or an apostasy from some bond of allegiance. Hence it is an aggravated form of sin, and in Job xxxiv, 37, we find the significant expression: "He adds upon his sin rebellion." The primary thought in רָשַׁע may be seen from Isa. lvii, 20, where it is said: "The wicked (הָרְשָׁעִים) are like the troubled (נִגָּרָשׁ, *tossed, agitated*) sea; for rest it cannot, and its waters will cast up (יְגָרְשׁוּ, *toss about*) mud and mire." So also in Job xxxiv, 29, the Hiphil of the verb רָשַׁע is put in contrast with the Hiphil of שָׁקַט, to *rest*, to *be quiet:* "Let him *give rest*, and who will *give trouble?*" The wicked man is one who is ever troubled and troubling. His counsels (Psa. i, 1), his plots (Psa. xxxvii, 12), his dishonesty and robberies (Psa. xxxvii, 21; cxix, 61), and manifold iniquities (Prov. v, 22), are a source of confusion and disturbance in the moral world, and that continually.

It remains to notice briefly the word אָשַׁם, the primary idea of which seems to be that of guilt or blame involved in אָשַׁם and שָׁגָה *committing a trespass through ignorance or negligence*, and שָׁגָה (שָׁגַג, שָׁגָא), with which it is frequently associated. The two words appear together in Lev. iv, 13: "If the whole congregation of Israel *err through ignorance* (יִשְׁגּוּ), and the matter be hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done with one from all the commandments of Jehovah what should not have been done, and *have become guilty*" (אָשֵׁמוּ). Compare verses 22, 27, and chapter v, 2, 3, 4, 17, 19. Hence it was natural that the noun אָשָׁם should become the common word for the *trespass offering* which was required of those who contracted guilt by negligence or error. For the passages just cited, and their contexts, show that any violation or infringement of a divine commandment, whether committed knowingly or not, involved one in fault, and the guilt, contracted unconsciously, required for its expiation a trespass offering as soon as the sin became known. Accordingly, it will be seen that שָׁגָה, and its derivatives, point to *errors* committed through ignorance (Job vi, 24; Num. xv, 27), while אָשָׁם denotes rather the guiltiness contracted by such errors, and felt and acknowledged when the sin becomes known.

A study of the divine names used in the Hebrew Scriptures is exceedingly interesting and suggestive. They are *Adonai*, *El*, *Elah*, *Elim*, *Eloah*, *Elion*, *Elohim*, *Shaddai*, *Jah*, and *Jehovah*. All these may be treated as synonymes, and yet each divine name has its peculiar concept and its corresponding usage. Divine names.

The synonymes of the New Testament furnish an equally interesting and profitable field of study. Many words appear to be used interchangeably, and yet a careful examination will usually show that each conveys its own distinct idea. Take, for instance, the two Greek words for *new*, καινός and νέος. Both are applied to the *new man* (comp. Eph. ii, 15; Col. iii, 10), the *new covenant* (Heb. ix, 15; xii, 24), and *new wine* (Matt. ix, 17; xxvi, 29); but a wider comparison shows that καινός denotes what is new in *quality* or *kind*, in opposition to something that has already existed and been known, used, and worn out; while νέος denotes what is new in *time*, what has not long existed, but is *young* and *fresh*. Both words occur in Matt. ix, 17: "They put new (νέον) wine into new (καινούς) skins." The new wine is here conceived as fresh, or recently made; the skins as never used before. The skin bottles may have been old or new as to age, but in order to preserve wine just made, they must not have been put to that use before. But the wine referred to in Matt. xxvi, 29, is to be thought of rather as a *new kind of wine:* "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it with you new (καινόν, new in a higher sense and quality), in the kingdom of my Father." So also Joseph's tomb, in which our Lord's body was laid, was called a new one (καινός, Matt. xxvii, 60; John xix, 41), not in the sense that it had recently been hewn from the rock, but because no one had ever been laid in it before. The new (καινή) commandment of John xiii, 34 is the law of love, which, proceeding from Christ, has a new aspect and scope; a depth and beauty and fulness which it had not before. But when John wrote his epistles of brotherly love it had become "an old commandment" (1 John ii, 7), long familiar, even "the word which ye heard from the beginning." But then he (verse 8) adds: "Again, a new commandment (ἐντολὴν καινήν) I write to you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining." The passing away of the old darkness and the growing intensity of the true light, according to proper Christian experience, continually develop and bring out new glories in the old commandment. This thing (ὅ), namely, the fact that the old commandment is also new, is seen to be true both in Christ and in the believer; because in the latter the darkness keeps passing away, and in the former the true light shines more and more.

Καινός and νέος.

In like manner the *tongues* mentioned in Mark xvi, 17 are called καίναι, because they would be new to the world, "other tongues" (Acts ii, 4), unlike any thing in the way of speaking which had been known before. So, too, the new name, new Jerusalem, new song,

new heaven and new earth (Rev. ii, 17; iii, 12; v, 9; xiv, 3; xxi, 1), to designate which *καινός* is used, are the renewed, ennobled, and glorious apocalyptic aspects of the things of the kingdom of God. The word *νέος* is used nine times in the Synoptic Gospels of wine recently made. In 1 Cor. v, 7, it is applied to the new lump of leaven, as that which has been recently prepared. It is used of the new man in Col. iii, 10, where the putting on the new man is spoken of as *a work recently accomplished;* whereas *καινός* is used in Eph. ii, 15, denoting rather the *character of the work accomplished.* So the new covenant may be conceived of as new, or recent (Heb. xii, 24), in opposition to that long ago given at Sinai, while it may also be designated as new in the sense of being different from the old (Matt. xxvi, 28; 2 Cor. iii, 6), which is worn out with age, and ready to vanish away (Heb. viii, 13). Let it be noted, also, that "newness of life" and "newness of spirit" (Rom. vi, 4; vii, 6), are expressed by *καινότης*; but *youth* is denoted by *νεότης* (Matt. xix 20; Mark x, 20; Luke xviii, 21; Acts xxvi, 4; 1 Tim. iv, 12).

Βίος and *ζωή*.

The two words for *life*, *βίος* and *ζωή*, are easily distinguishable as used in the New Testament. Βίος denotes the present human life considered especially with reference to modes and conditions of existence. It nowhere means *lifetime*, or *period of life;* for the true text of 1 Pet. iv, 3, which was supposed to convey this meaning, omits the word. It commonly denotes the *means of living;* that on which one depends as a means of supporting life. Thus the poor widow cast into the treasury her whole *living* (*βίον*, Mark xii, 44). Another woman spent all her *living* on physicians (Luke viii, 14). The same meaning appears in Luke xv, 12, 30; xxi, 4. In Luke viii, 14 and 1 John iii, 17 it denotes, rather, life as conditioned by riches, pleasures, and abundance. In 1 Tim. ii, 2; 2 Tim. ii, 4; 1 John ii, 16 it conveys the idea of the manner and style in which one spends his life; and so, in all its uses, *βίος* has reference solely to the life of man as lived in this world. Ζωή, on the other hand, is the antithesis of *death* (*θάνατος*), and while used occasionally in the New Testament in the sense of physical existence (Acts xvii, 25; 1 Cor. iii, 22; xv, 19; Phil. i, 20; James iv, 14), is defined by Cremer as "the kind of existence possessed by individualized being, to be explained as *self-governing existence*, which God *is*, and man *has* or *is said to have*, and which, on its part, is supreme over all the rest of creation."[1] Tholuck

[1] Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 272. Cremer goes on to show how from the sense of *physical existence* the word is also used to denote a perfect and abiding antithesis to death (Heb. vii, 16), a positive freedom from death (Acts ii, 28; 2 Cor. v, 4), and the sum of the divine promises under the Gospel, "belonging

observes: "The words ζωή and θάνατος (*death*), along with the cognate verbs, although appearing in very various applications, are most clearly explained when we suppose the following views to have lain at the basis of them. God is the *life eternal* (ζωὴ αἰώνιος, 1 John v, 20), or the *light*, (φῶς, 1 John i, 5; James i, 7). Beings made in the image of God have true life only in fellowship with him. Wherever this life is absent there is *death*. Accordingly the idea of ζωή comprehends *holiness* and *bliss*, that of θάνατος *sin* and *misery*. Now as both the ζωή and the θάνατος manifest themselves in different degrees, sometimes under different aspects, the words acquire a variety of significations. The highest grade of the ζωή is the life which the redeemed live with the Saviour in the glorious kingdom of heaven. Viewed on this side, ζωή denotes continued existence after death, communion with God, and blessedness, of which each is implied in the other."[1]

Ἀγαπάω and φιλέω.

In Jesus' conversation with Simon Peter at the sea of Tiberias (John xxi, 15–17), we have four sets of synonymes. First, the words ἀγαπάω and φιλέω, for which we have no two corresponding English words. The former, as opposed to the latter, denotes a *devout reverential love*, grounded in reason and admiration. Φιλέω, on the other hand, denotes the love of a warm personal affection, a *tender emotional love of the heart*. "The first expresses," says Trench, "a more reasoning attachment, of choice and selection (*diligere*=*deligere*), from seeing in the object upon whom it is bestowed that which is worthy of regard; or else from a sense that such was fit and due toward the person so regarded, as being a benefactor, or the like; while the second, without being necessarily an unreasoning attachment, does yet oftentimes give less account of itself to itself; is more instinctive, is more of the feelings, implies more passion."[2] The range of φιλέω, according to Cremer, is wider than that of ἀγαπάω, but ἀγαπάω stands high above φιλέω on account of its moral import. It involves the moral affection of conscious, deliberate will, and may therefore be depended on in moments of trial. But φιλέω, involving the love of natural inclination and impulse, may be variable.[3] Observe, then,

to those to whom the future is sure, already in possession of all who are partakers of the New Testament salvation, 'that leadeth unto life,' and who already in this life begin life eternal." (Matt. vii, 14; Tit. i, 2; 2 Tim. i, 1; Acts xi, 18; xiii, 48). He further observes, that in the writings of Paul "ζωή is the substance of Gospel preaching, the final aim of faith (1 Tim. i, 16);" in the writings of John it "is the subject matter and aim of divine revelation." Comp. John v, 39; 1 John v, 20; etc.

[1] Commentary on Romans v, 12.

[2] Synonymes of the New Testament, sub verbo.

[3] Comp. Biblico-Theological Lexicon, pp. 11, 12.

the use of these words in the passage before us. "Jesus says to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, dost thou devoutly love (*ἀγαπᾷς*) me more than these? He says to him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest (*οἶδας, seest*) that I tenderly love (*φιλῶ*) thee." In his second question our Lord, in tender regard for Simon, omits the words *more than these*, and simply asks: "Dost thou devoutly love (*ἀγαπᾷς*) me?" To this Simon answers precisely as before, not venturing to assume so lofty a love as *ἀγαπάω* implies. In his third question (verse 17) our Lord uses Simon's word, thus approaching nearer to the heart and emotion of the disciple: "Simon, son of Jonah, dost thou tenderly love (*φιλεῖς*) me?" The change of word, as well as his asking for the third time, filled Peter with grief (*ἐλυπήθη*), and he replied with great emotion: "O Lord, all things thou knowest (*οἶδας*, seest, dost perceive), thou dost surely know (*γινώσκεις*, art fully cognizant of the fact, hast full assurance by personal knowledge) that I tenderly love (*φιλῶ*) thee." The distinction between *οἶδα* (from *εἶδω*, to *see*, to *perceive*) and *γινώσκω* (to obtain and have knowledge of) is very subtle, and the words appear to be often used interchangeably. According to Cremer, "there is merely the difference that *γινώσκειν* implies an active relation, to wit, a self-reference of the knower to the object of his knowledge; whereas, in the case of *εἰδέναι*, the object has simply come within the sphere of perception, within the knower's circle of vision."[1] As used by Peter the two words differ, in that *γινώσκω* expresses a deeper and more positive knowledge than *οἶδα*.

Οἶδα and γινώσκω.

According to many ancient authorities we have in this passage three different words to denote lambs and sheep. In verse 15 the word is *ἀρνία, lambs*, in verse 16 *πρόβατα, sheep*, and in verse 17 *προβάτια, sheeplings*, or *choice sheep*. The difference and distinct import of these several words it is not difficult to understand. The *lambs* are those of tender age; the young of the flock. The *sheep* are the full-grown and strong. The *sheeplings*, *προβάτια*, are the choice full-grown sheep, those which deserve peculiar tenderness and care, with special reference, perhaps, to the milch-ewes of the flock. Compare Isa. xl, 11. Then, in connexion with these different words for sheep we have also the synonymes *βόσκω* and *ποιμαίνω*, to denote the various cares and work of the shepherd. Βόσκω means to *feed*, and is used especially of a shepherd providing his flock with pasture, leading them to the field, and furnishing them with food. Ποιμαίνω is a word of wider significance, and involves the whole office and work of a shepherd. It comes more nearly to our word

Ἀρνία, πρόβατα, and προβάτια.

Βόσκω and ποιμαίνω.

[1] Biblico-Theological Lexicon, p. 230.

tend, and includes the ideas of feeding, folding, governing, guiding, guarding, and whatever a good shepherd is expected to do for his flock. Βόσκω denotes the more special and tender care, the giving of nourishment, and is appropriately used when speaking of lambs. Ποιμαίνω is more general and comprehensive, and means to rule as well as to feed. Hence appear the depth and fulness of the threefold commandment: "Feed my lambs," "Tend my sheep," "Feed my choice sheep." The lambs and the choice sheep need special nourishment; all the sheep need the shepherd's faithful care. It is well to note, that, on the occasion of the first miraculous draught of fishes, at this same sea of Galilee (Luke v, 1–10), Jesus sounded the depths of Simon Peter's soul (verse 8), awakened him to an awful sense of sin, and then told him that he should thereafter catch men (verse 10). Now, after this second like miracle, at the same sea, and with another probing of his heart, he indicates to him that there is something more for him to do than to catch men. He must know how to care for them after they have been caught. He must be a shepherd of the Lord's sheep as well as a fisher of men, and he must learn to imitate the manifold care of the Great Shepherd of Israel, of whom Isaiah wrote (Isa. xl, 11): "As a shepherd he will feed his flock (עֶדֶר); in his arms he will gather the lambs (טְלָאִים), and in his bosom bear; the milch-ewes (עָלוֹת) he will gently lead."

The synonymes of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures have been as yet but slightly and imperfectly treated.[1] They afford the biblical scholar a broad and most interesting field of study. It is a spiritual as well as an intellectual discipline to discriminate sharply between synonymous terms of Holy Writ, and trace the diverging lines of thought, and the far-reaching suggestions which often arise therefrom. The foregoing pages will have made it apparent that the exact import and the discriminative usage of words are all-important to the biblical interpreter. Without an accurate knowledge of the meaning of his words, no one can properly either understand or explain the language of any author.

[1] The only works of note on the subject are, Girdlestone, Synonymes of the Old Testament, London, 1871; and Trench, Synonymes of the New Testament, originally published in two small volumes, and subsequently in one; Ninth Edition, London, 1880. The work of Tittmann, De Synonymis in Novo Testamento, translated and published in two volumes of the Edinburgh Biblical Cabinet, is now of no great value. Cremer's Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament contains a very excellent treatment of a number of the New Testament synonymes; and Wilson's Syntax and Synonymes of the Greek Testament (London, 1864) is well worthy of consultation. A brief but very valuable discussion of the New Testament synonymes is also furnished in Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti, translated and enlarged by Thayer. New York, 1887.

CHAPTER V.

THE GRAMMATICO-HISTORICAL SENSE.

HAVING become familiar with the meaning of words, and thoroughly versed in the principles and methods by which their signification and usage are ascertained, we are prepared to investigate the grammatico-historical sense. This phrase is believed to have originated with Karl A. G. Keil, whose treatise on Historical Interpretation and Text-Book of New Testament Hermeneutics[1] furnished an important contribution to the science of interpretation. We have already defined the grammatico-historical method of interpretation as distinguished from the allegorical, mystical, naturalistic, mythical, and other methods,[2] which have more or less prevailed. The grammatico-historical sense of a writer is such an interpretation of his language as is required by the laws of grammar and the facts of history. Sometimes we speak of the literal sense, by which we mean the most simple, direct, and ordinary meaning of phrases and sentences. By this term we usually denote a meaning opposed to the figurative or metaphorical. The grammatical sense is essentially the same as the literal, the one expression being derived from the Greek, the other from the Latin. But in English usage the word grammatical is applied rather to the arrangement and construction of words and sentences. By the historical sense we designate, rather, that meaning of an author's words which is required by historical considerations. It demands that we consider carefully the time of the author, and the circumstances under which he wrote.

Grammatico-historical sense defined.

"Grammatical and historical interpretation, when rightly understood," says Davidson, "are synonymous. The special laws of grammar, agreeably to which the sacred writers employed language, were the result of their peculiar circumstances; and history alone throws us back into these circumstances. A new language was not made for the authors of Scripture; they conformed to the current language of the country and time. Their compositions would not have been otherwise intelligible. They

Davidson's statement.

[1] De historica librorum sacrorum interpretatione ejusque necessitate. Lps., 1788. Lehrbuch der Hermeneutik des N. T. nach Grundsätzen der grammatisch-historischen Interpretation. Lpz., 1810. A Latin translation, by Emmerling, appeared in 1811.

[2] Compare above, p. 70.

took up the *usus loquendi* as they found it, modifying it, as is quite natural, by the relations internal and external amid which they thought and wrote." The same writer also observes: "The grammatico-historical sense is made out by the application of grammatical and historical considerations. The great object to be ascertained is the *usus loquendi*, embracing the laws or principles of universal grammar which form the basis of every language. These are nothing but the logic of the mind, comprising the modes in which ideas are formed, combined, and associated, agreeably to the original susceptibilities of the intellectual constitution. They are the physiology of the human mind as exemplified practically by every individual. General grammar is wont to be occupied, however, with the usage of the best writers; whereas the laws of language as observed by the writers of Scripture should be mainly attended to by the sacred interpreter, even though the philosophical grammarian may not admit them all to be correct. It is the *usus loquendi* of the inspired authors which forms the subject of the grammatical principles recognized and followed by the expositor. The grammar he adopts is deduced from the use of the language employed in the Bible. This may not be conformed to the practice of the best writers; it may not be philosophically just; but he must not, therefore, pronounce it erroneous. The modes of expression used by each writer—the utterances of his mental associations, constitute his *usus loquendi*. These form his grammatical principles; and the interpreter takes them as his own in the business of exegesis. Hence, too, there arises a special as well as a universal grammar. Now we attain to a knowledge of the peculiar *usus loquendi* in the way of historical investigation. The religious, moral, and psychological ideas, under whose influence a language has been formed and moulded; all the objects with which the writers were conversant, and the relations in which they were placed, are traced out *historically*. The costume of the ideas in the minds of the biblical authors originated from the character of the times, country, place, and education, under which they acted. Hence, in order to ascertain their peculiar *usus loquendi*, we should know all those institutions and influences whereby it was formed or affected." [1]

General principles and methods.

The general principles and methods by which we ascertain the *usus loquendi* of single terms, or words, have been presented in the preceding chapter. Substantially the same principles are to serve us as we proceed to investigate the grammatico-historical sense. We must attend to the

[1] Davidson, Sacred Hermeneutics, pp. 225, 226.

definitions and construction which an author puts upon his own terms, and never suppose that he intends to contradict himself or puzzle his readers. The context and connection of thought are also to be studied in order to apprehend the general subject, scope, and purpose of the writer. But especially is it necessary to ascertain the correct grammatical construction of sentences. Subject and predicate and subordinate clauses must be closely analyzed, and the whole document, book, or epistle, should be viewed, as far as possible, from the author's historical standpoint.

Words and sentences but one meaning in one place.

A fundamental principle in grammatico-historical exposition is that words and sentences can have but one signification in one and the same connection. The moment we neglect this principle we drift out upon a sea of uncertainty and conjecture. It is commonly assumed by the universal sense of mankind that unless one designedly put forth a riddle, he will so speak as to convey his meaning as clearly as possible to others. Hence that meaning of a sentence which most readily suggests itself to a reader or hearer, is, in general, to be received as the true meaning, and that alone. Take, for example, the account of Daniel and his three companions, as given in the first chapter of the Book of Daniel. The simplest child readily grasps the meaning. There can be no doubt as to the general import of the words throughout the chapter, and that the writer intended to inform his readers in a particular way how God honoured those young men because of their abstemiousness, and because of their refusal to defile themselves with the meats and drinks which the king had appointed for them. The same may be said of the lives of the patriarchs as recorded in the Book of Genesis, and, indeed, of any of the historical narratives of the Bible. They are to be accepted as a trustworthy record of facts.

Miracles to be literally understood.

This principle holds with equal force in the narratives of miraculous events. For the miracles of the Bible are recorded as facts, actual occurrences, witnessed by few or by many as the case might be, and the writers give no intimation that their statements involve any thing but plain literal truth. Thus, in Josh. v, 13–vi, 5, a man appears to Joshua, holding a sword in his hand, announcing himself as "a prince of the host of Jehovah" (verse 14), and giving directions for the capture of Jericho. This may, possibly, have occurred in a dream or a waking vision; but such a supposition is not in strictest accord with the statements. For it would involve the supposition that Joshua dreamed that he fell on his face, and took off his shoes from his feet, as well as looked and listened. Revelations from Jehovah

were wont to come through visions and dreams (Num. xii, 6), but the simplest exposition of this passage is that the angel of Jehovah openly appeared to Joshua, and the occurrences were all outward and actual, rather than by vision or dream.

Jephthah's daughter a burnt-offering.

The simple but mournful narrative of the offering up of Jephthah's daughter (Judg. xi, 30–40) has been perverted to mean that Jephthah devoted his daughter to perpetual virginity—an exposition that arose from the *a priori* assumption that a judge of Israel must have known that human sacrifices were an abomination to Jehovah. But no one presumes to question that he vowed to offer as a burnt-offering that which came forth from the doors of his house to meet him (verse 31). Jephthah could scarcely have thought of a cow, or a sheep, or goat, as coming out of his house to meet him. Still less could he have contemplated a dog, or any unclean animal. The awful solemnity and tremendous force of his vow appear, rather, in the thought that he contemplated no common offering, but a victim to be taken from among the inmates of his house. But he then little thought that of all his household—servants, young men, and maidens—his daughter and only child would be the first to meet him. Hence his anguish, as indicated in verse 35. But she accepted her fate with a sublime heroism. She asked two months of life in which to bewail her virginity, for that was to her the one only thing that darkened her thoughts of death. To die unwedded and childless was the sting of death to a Hebrew woman, and especially one who was as a princess in Israel. Take away that bitter thought, and with Jephthah's daughter it were a sublime and enviable thing to "die for God, her country, and her sire."

The notion that, previously to her being devoted to a life of virginity and seclusion, she desired two months to mourn over such a fate, appears exceedingly improbable, if not absurd. For, as Cappellus well observes, "If she desired or felt obliged to bewail her virginity, it were especially suitable to bewail that when shut up in the monastery; previously to her being shut up it would have been more suitable, with youthful friends and associates, to have spent those two months joyfully and pleasantly, since afterward there would remain to her a time for weeping more than sufficiently long."[1] The sacred writer declares (verse 39) that, after the two months, Jephthah did to his daughter the vow *which he had vowed* —not something else which he had not vowed. He records, not as the manner in which he did his vow, but as the most thrilling knell that in the ears of her father and companions sounded over that

[1] Critici Sacri, tom. ii, p. 2076.

daughter's funeral pile, and sent its lingering echo into the later times, that "she knew no man." [1]

Jesus' resurrection a literal historical fact.

The narratives of the resurrection of Jesus admit of no rational explanation aside from that simple grammatico-historical sense in which the Christian Church has ever understood them. The naturalistic and mythical theories, when applied to this miracle of miracles, utterly break down. The alleged discrepancies between the several evangelists, instead of disproving the truthfulness of their accounts, become, on closer inspection, confirmatory evidences of the accuracy and trustworthiness of all their statements. If the New Testament narratives are deserving of any credit at all, the following facts are evident: (1) Jesus foretold his death and resurrection, but his disciples were slow to comprehend him, and did not fully accept his statements. (2) Immediately after the crucifixion the disciples were smitten with deep dejection and fear; but after the third day they all claimed to have seen the Lord, and they gave minute details of several of his appearances. (3) They affirm that they saw him ascend into the heavens, and soon afterward are found preaching "Jesus and the resurrection" in the streets of Jerusalem and in all Palestine and the regions beyond. (4) Many years afterward Paul declared these facts, and affirmed that Jesus appeared at one time to above five hundred brethren, of whom the greater part were still alive (1 Cor. xv, 6). He affirmed, that, if Christ had not been raised from the dead, the preaching of the Gospel and the faith of the Church were

[1] We gain nothing by attempting to evade the obvious import of any of the biblical narratives. On the treatment of this account of Jephthah's daughter Stanley observes: "As far back as we can trace the sentiment of those who read the passage, in Jonathan the Targumist, and Josephus, and through the whole of the first eleven centuries of Christendom, the story was taken in its literal sense as describing the death of the maiden, although the attention of the Church was, as usual, diverted to distant allegorical meanings. Then, it is said, from a polemical bias of Kimchi, arose the interpretation that she was not killed, but immured in celibacy. From the Jewish theology this spread to the Christian. By this time the notion had sprung up that every act recorded in the Old Testament was to be defended according to the standard of Christian morality; and, accordingly, the process began of violently wresting the words of Scripture to meet the preconceived fancies of later ages. In this way entered the hypothesis of Jephthah's daughter having been devoted as a nun; contrary to the plain meaning of the text, contrary to the highest authorities of the Church, contrary to all the usages of the old dispensation. In modern times a more careful study of the Bible has brought us back to the original sense. And with it returns the deep pathos of the original story, and the lesson which it reads of the heroism of the father and daughter, to be admired and loved, in the midst of the fierce superstitions across which it plays like a sunbeam on a stormy sea."—Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church. First Series, p. 397.

but an empty thing, based upon a gigantic falsehood. This conclusion follows irresistibly from the above-named facts. We must either accept the statements of the evangelists, in their plain and obvious import, or else meet the inevitable alternative that they knowingly put forth a falsehood (a concerted testimony which was essentially a lie before God), and went preaching it in all the world, ready to seal their testimony by tortures and death. This latter alternative involves too great a strain upon our reason to be accepted for a moment, especially when the unique and straightforward Gospel narratives furnish such a clear and adequate historical basis for the marvellous rise and power of Christianity in the world.

Grammatical accuracy to be looked for in the Scriptures.

Winer's Grammar of the New Testament, and the modern critical commentaries on the whole or on parts of the New Testament—such as those of Meyer, De Wette, Alford, Ellicott, and Godet—have served largely to place the interpretation of the Christian Scriptures on a sound grammatico-historical basis, and a constant use of these great works is all-important to the biblical scholar. He must, by repeated grammatical praxis, make himself familiar with the peculiarities of the New Testament dialect. The significance of the presence or the absence of the article has often much to do with the meaning of a passage. "In the language of living intercourse," says Winer, "it is utterly impossible that the article should be omitted where it is decidedly necessary, or employed where it is not demanded. Ὄρος can never denote THE *mountain*, nor τὸ ὄρος A *mountain*."[1] The position of words and clauses, and peculiarities of grammatical structure, may often serve to emphasize important thoughts and statements. The special usage of the genitive, the dative, or the accusative case, or of the active, middle, or passive voice, often conveys a notable significance. The same is also true of conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions. These serve to indicate peculiar shades of meaning, and delicate and suggestive relations of words and sentences, without a nice apprehension of which the real sense of a passage may be lost to the reader. The authorized version often obscures an important passage of the New Testament by a mistranslation of the aorist tense. Take, as a single example, 2 Cor. v, 14: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." The *if* is now allowed to be an error in the text and should be omitted. The verse should then be translated: "For the love of Christ constrains us, having judged this, that one died for all; therefore the all died." The first verb, *constrains* (συνέχει), is in the present

Greek tenses.

[1] New Testament Grammar, p. 115. Andover, 1874.

tense, and denotes the then present experience of the apostle at the time of his writing: The love of Christ (Christ's love for men) now constrains us ("holds us in bounds"—Meyer); and this is the ever-present and abiding experience of all like the apostle. *Having judged* (κρίναντας) is the aorist participle, and points to a definite judgment which he had formed at some past time—probably at, or soon after, his conversion. The statement that one *died* (ἀπέθανεν, aorist singular) for all, points to that great historic event which, above every other, exhibited the love of Christ for men. Ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον, *therefore the all died*—"the all," who meet the condition specified in the next verse, and "live unto him who for their sakes died and rose again," are conceived as having died with Christ. They were crucified with Christ, united with him by the likeness of his death (Rom. vi, 5, 6).[1] Compare also Col. iii, 3: "For ye died (not ye are dead), and your life is hidden (κέκρυπται, *has become hidden*) with Christ in God." That is, ye died at the time ye became united with Christ by faith, and as a consequence of that death ye now have a spiritual life in Christ.

"With regard to the tenses of the verb," says Winer, "New Testament grammarians and expositors have been guilty of the greatest mistakes. In general, the tenses are employed in the New Testament exactly in the same manner as in Greek authors. The aorist marks simply the past (merely occurrence at some former time—viewed, too, as momentary), and is the tense employed in narration; the imperfect and pluperfect always have reference to secondary events connected in respect to time with the principal event (as relative tenses); the perfect brings the past into connexion with the present, representing an action in reference to the present as concluded. No one of these tenses, strictly and properly taken, can stand for another, as commentators often would have us believe. But where such an interchange appears to take place, either it is merely apparent, and a sufficient reason (especially a rhetorical one) can be discovered why this and no other tense has been used, or it is to be set down to the account of a certain inaccuracy peculiar to the language of the people, which did not conceive and express relations of time with entire precision."[2]

[1] When Christ died the redeeming death for all, all died, in respect of their fleshly life, with him; this *objective* matter of fact which Paul here affirms has its *subjective* realization in the faith of the individuals, through which they have *entered into* that death-fellowship with Christ *given* through his death for all, so that they have now, by means of baptism, become buried with him (Col. ii, 12).—Meyer, in loco.

[2] New Testament Grammar, p. 264. Comp. Buttmann's Grammar of the New Testament Greek; Thayer's Translation, pp. 194–206. Andover, 1873.

The grammatical sense is to be always sought by a careful study and application of the well-established principles and rules of the language. A close attention to the meaning and relations of words, a care to note the course of thought, and to allow each case, mood, tense, and the position of each word, to contribute its part to the general whole, and a caution lest we assign to words and phrases a scope and conception foreign to the *usus loquendi* of the language —these are rules, which, if faithfully observed, will always serve to bring out the real import of any written document.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTEXT, SCOPE, AND PLAN.

Context, Scope, and Plan defined.

THE grammatico-historical sense is further developed by a study of the context and scope of an author's work. The word *context*, as the etymology intimates (Latin, *con*, together, and *textus*, woven), denotes something that is woven together, and, applied to a written document, it means the connexion of thought supposed to run through every passage which constitutes by itself a whole. By some writers it is called *the connexion*. The immediate context is that which immediately precedes or follows a given word or sentence. The remote context is that which is less closely connected, and may embrace a whole paragraph or section. The scope, on the other hand, is the end or purpose which the writer has in view. Every author is supposed to have some object in writing, and that object will be either formally stated in some part of his work, or else apparent from the general course of thought. The plan of a work is the arrangement of its several parts; the order of thought which the writer pursues.

The context, scope, and plan of a writing should, therefore, be studied together; and, logically, perhaps, the scope should be first ascertained. For the meaning of particular parts of a book may be fully apprehended only when we have mastered the general purpose and design of the whole. The plan of a book, moreover, is most intimately related to its scope. The one cannot be fully apprehended without some knowledge of the other. Even where the scope is formally announced, an analysis of the plan will serve to make it more clear. A writer who has a well-defined plan in his mind will be likely to keep to that plan, and make all his narratives and particular arguments bear upon the main subject.

The scope of several of the books of Scripture is formally stated by the writers. Most of the prophets of the Old Testament state the occasion and purpose of their oracles at the beginning of their books, and at the beginning of particular sections. The purpose of the Book of Proverbs is announced in verses 1–6 of the first chapter. The subject of Ecclesiastes is indicated at the beginning, in the words "Vanity of vanities." The design of John's Gospel is formally stated at the close of the twentieth chapter: "These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." The special purpose and occasion of the Epistle of Jude are given in verses 3 and 4: "Beloved, while giving all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I found (or had) necessity to write to you exhorting to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. For there crept in stealthily certain men, who of old were forewritten unto this judgment, ungodly, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Master, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The purport of this is, that while Jude was diligently planning and preparing to write a treatise or epistle on the common salvation, the circumstances stated in verse 4 led him to break off from that purpose for the time, and write to exhort them to contend earnestly for the faith once for all (*ἅπαξ, only once;* "no other faith will be given."—Bengel) delivered to the saints.

Scope of many books formally announced.

The scope of some books must be ascertained by a diligent examination of their contents. Thus, for example, the Book of Genesis is found to consist of ten sections, each beginning with the heading, "These are the generations," etc. This tenfold history of generations is preceded and introduced by the record of creation in chapter i, 1–ii, 3. The plan of the author appears, therefore, to be, first of all to record the miraculous creation of the heavens and the land, and then the developments (evolutions) in human history that followed that creation. Accordingly, the first developments of human life and history are called "the generations of the heavens and the land" (chap. ii, 4). The historical standpoint of the writer is "the day" from which the generations (תּוֹלְדוֹת, *growths*) start, the day when man was formed of the dust of the ground and the breath of life from the heavens. So the first man is conceived as the product of the land and the heavens by the word of God, and the word בָּרָא, *create*, does not occur in this whole section. "The day" of chapter ii, 4, which most interpreters understand of the whole creative week, we take rather to be the *terminus a quo* of generations, the

Plan and Scope of Genesis seen in its contents.

day from which, according to verse 5, all the Edenic growths began; the day when the whole face of the ground was watered, when the garden of Eden was planted, and the first human pair were brought together. It was the sixth day of the creative week, "the day that Jehovah God made (עָשׂוֹת, in the sense of *effected, did, accomplished*, brought to completion) land and heavens." Adam was the "son of God" (Luke iii, 38), and the day of his creation was the point of time when Jehovah Elohim first revealed himself in history as one with the Creator. In chapter i, which records the beginning of the heavens and the land, only Elohim is named, the God in whom, as the plural form of the name denotes, centre all fulness and manifoldness of divine powers. But at chapter ii, 4, where the record of generations begins, we first meet with the name Jehovah, the personal Revealer, who enters into covenant with his creatures, and places man under moral law. Creation, so to speak, began with the pluripotent God—Elohim; its completion in the formation of man, and in subsequent developments, was wrought by Jehovah, the God of revelation, of law, and of love. Having traced the generations of the heavens and the land through Adam down to Seth (iv, 25, 26), the writer next records the outgrowths of that line in what he calls "the book of the generations of Adam" (v, 1). This book is no history of Adam's origin, for that was incorporated in the generations of the heavens and the land, but of Adam's posterity through Seth down to the time of the flood. Next follow "the generations of Noah (vi, 9), then those of his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth (x, 1), then those of Shem through Arphaxad to Terah (xi, 10–26), and then, in regular order, the generations of Terah (xi, 27, under which the whole history of Abraham is placed), Ishmael (xxv, 12), Isaac (xxv, 19), Esau (xxxvi, 1), and Jacob (xxxvii, 2). Hence the great design of the book was evidently to place on record the beginning and the earliest developments of human life and history. Keeping in mind this scope and structure of the book, we see its unity, and also find each section and subdivision sustaining a logical fitness and relation to the whole. Thus, too, the import of not a few passages becomes more clear and forcible.

Plan and Scope of Exodus.

A very cursory examination of the Book of Exodus shows us that its great purpose is to record the history of the Exodus from Egypt and the legislation at Mt. Sinai, and it is readily divisible into two parts (1) chaps. i–xviii; (2) xix–xl; corresponding to these two great events. But a closer examination and analysis reveal many beautiful and suggestive relations of the different sections. First, we have a vivid narrative

of *the bondage of Israel* (chaps. i–xi). It is sharply outlined in chapter i, enhanced by the account of Moses' early life and exile (chaps. ii–iv), and shown in its intense persistence by the account of Pharaoh's hardness of heart, and the consequent plagues which smote the land of Egypt (chaps. v–xi). Second, we have the *redemption of Israel* (chaps. xii–xv, 21). This is first typified by the Passover (chaps. xii–xiii, 16), realized in the marvels and triumphs of the march out of Egypt, and the passage of the Red Sea (xiii, 17–xiv, 31), and celebrated in the triumphal song of Moses (xv, 1–21). Then, third, we have *the consecration of Israel* (xv, 22–xl) set forth in seven sections. (1) The march from the Red Sea to Rephidim (xv, 22–xvii, 7), depicting the first free activities of the people after their redemption, and their need of special Divine compassion and help. (2) Attitude of the heathen toward Israel in the cases of hostile Amalek and friendly Jethro (xvii, 8–xviii). (3) The giving of the Law at Sinai (xix–xxiv). (4) The tabernacle planned (xxv–xxvii). (5) The Aaronic priesthood and sundry sacred services ordained (xxviii–xxxi). (6) The backslidings of the people punished, and renewal of the covenant and laws (xxxii–xxxiv). (7) The tabernacle constructed, reared, and filled with the glory of Jehovah (xxxv–xl).

These different sections of Exodus are not designated by special headings, like those of Genesis, but are easily distinguished as so many subsidary portions of one whole, to which each contributes its share, and in the light of which each is seen to have peculiar significance.

Subject and Plan of the Epistle to the Romans.

Many have taken in hand to set forth in order the course of thought in the Epistle to the Romans. There can be no doubt, to those who have closely studied this epistle, that, after his opening salutation and personal address, the apostle announces his great theme in verse 16 of the first chapter. It is *the Gospel considered as the power of God unto salvation to every believer, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* This is not formally announced as the thesis, but it manifestly expresses, in a happy personal way, the scope of the entire epistle. "It had for its end," says Alford, "the settlement, on the broad principles of God's truth and love, of the mutual relations and union in Christ of God's ancient people and the recently engrafted world. What wonder, then, if it be found to contain an exposition of man's unworthiness and God's redeeming love, such as not even Holy Scripture itself elsewhere furnishes?" [1]

In the development of his plan the apostle first spreads out before

[1] Greek Testament; Prolegomena to Romans.

us an appalling portraiture of the heathen world, and adds, that even the Jew, with all his advantage of God's revelation, is under the same condemnation; for by the law the whole world is involved in sin, and exposed to the righteous judgment of God. This is the first division (i, 18–iii, 20). The second, which extends to the close of the eighth chapter, and ends with a magnificent expression of Christian confidence and hope, discusses and illustrates the proposition stated at its beginning: "Now, apart from law, a righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even a righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ unto all them that believe" (iii, 21). Under this head we find unfolded the doctrine of justification by faith, and the progressive glorification of the new man through sanctification of the Spirit. Then follows the apostle's vindication of the righteousness of God in casting off the Jews and calling the Gentiles (chaps. ix–xi), an argument that exhibits throughout a yearning for Israel's salvation, and closes with an outburst of wondering emotion over the "depth of riches and wisdom and knowledge of God," and a doxology (xi, 33–36). The concluding chapters (xii–xvi) consist of a practical application of the great lessons of the epistle in exhortations, counsels, and precepts for the Church, and numerous salutations and references to personal Christian friends.

It will be found that a proper attention to this general plan and scope of the Epistle will greatly help to the understanding of its smaller sections.

Having ascertained the general scope and plan of a book of Scripture, we are more fully prepared to trace the context and bearings of its particular parts. The context, as we have observed, may be near or remote, according as we seek its immediate or more distant connexion with the particular word or passage in hand. It may run through a few verses or a whole section. The last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah exhibit a marked unity of thought and style, but they are capable of several subdivisions. The celebrated Messianic prophecy in chapters lii, 13–liii, 12, is a complete whole in itself, but most unhappily torn asunder by the division of chapters. But, though forming a clearly defined section by themselves, these fifteen verses must not be severed from their context, or treated as if they had no vital connexion with what precedes and what follows after. Alexander justly condemns "the radical error of supposing that the book is susceptible of distribution into detached and independent parts."[1] It has its divisions more or less clearly defined, but they cling to each other,

Context of particular passages.

[1] Later Prophecies of Isaiah, p. 247. New York, 1847.

and are interwoven with each other, and form a living whole. It is beautifully observed by Nägelsbach, that "chapters xlix–lvii are like a wreath of glorious flowers intertwined with black ribbon; or like a song of triumph, through whose muffled tone there courses the melody of a dirge, yet so that gradually the mournful chords merge into the melody of the song of triumph. And at the same time the discourse of the prophet is arranged with so much art that the mourning ribbon ties into a great bow exactly in the middle. For chapter liii forms the middle of the entire prophetic cycle of chapters xl–lxvi."[1]

The immediate connexion with what precedes may be thus seen: In lii, 1–12, the future salvation of Israel is glowingly depicted as a restoration more glorious than that from the bondage of Egypt or from Assyrian exile. Jerusalem awakes and rises from the dust of ruin; the captive is released from fetters; the feet of fleet messengers speed with good tidings, and the watchmen take up the glad report, and sound the cry of redemption. And then (verse 11) an exhortation is sounded to depart from all pollution and bondage, and the sublime exodus is contrasted (verse 12) with the hasty flight from Egypt, but with the assurance that, as of old, Jehovah would still be as the pillar of cloud and fire before them and behind them. At this our passage begins, and the thought naturally turns to the great Leader of this spiritual exodus—a greater than Moses, even though that ancient servant of Jehovah was faithful in all his house (Num. xii, 7). Our prophet proceeds to delineate Him whose sufferings and sorrows for the transgressions of his people far transcended those of Moses, and whose final triumph through the fruit of the travail of his soul shall be also infinitely greater.

The much-disputed passage in Matt. xi, 12 can be properly explained only by special regard to the context. Literally translated, the verse reads: "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of the heavens suffers violence (*βιάζεται*), and violent ones are seizing upon it." There are seven different ways in which this passage has been explained.

Matt. xi, 12 explained in the light of its context.

1. The violence here mentioned is explained by one class of interpreters as a *hostile violence*—the kingdom is violently persecuted by its enemies, and violent persecutors seize on it as by storm. The words themselves would not unnaturally bear such a meaning, but we find nothing in the context to harmonize with a reference to hostile forces, or violent persecution.

2. Fritzsche translates *βιάζεται* by *magna vi praedicatur* (is

[1] Commentary on Isaiah, lii, 13, in Lange's Biblework.

proclaimed with great power); but this is contrary to the meaning of the word, and utterly without warrant.

3. The most common interpretation is that which takes *βιάζεται* in a good sense, and explains it of the eager and anxious struggles of many to enter into the new kingdom of God. This view, however, is open to the twofold objection, that it does not allow the word *βιάζεται* its proper significance, and it has no relevancy to the context. It could scarcely be said of the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, the dead, and the poor, mentioned in verse 5, that they took the kingdom by violence, for whatever violence was exerted in their case proceeded not from them but from Christ.

4. According to Lange "the expression is metaphorical, denoting the violent bursting forth of the kingdom of heaven, as the kernel of the ancient theocracy, through the husk of the Old Testament. John and Christ are themselves the violent who take it by force—the former, as commencing the assault; the latter, as completing the conquest. Accordingly, this is a figurative description of the great era which had then commenced."[1] So far as this exposition might describe an era which began with John, it would certainly have relevancy to the immediate context; but no such era of a *violent* bursting forth of the kingdom of heaven had as yet opened. The kingdom of God was not yet come; it was only at hand. Besides, the making of both John and Christ the violent ones, in the sense of breaking open the husk of the Old Testament to let the kingdom of the heavens out, is a far-fetched and most improbable idea.

5. Others take *βιάζεται* in a middle sense: the kingdom of heaven violently breaks in—forcibly introduces itself, or thrusts itself forward in spite of all opposition. This usage of the word may be allowed; but the interpretation it offers is open to the same objection as that of Lange just given. It cannot be shown that there was any such violent breaking in of the kingdom of God from the days of John the Baptist to the time when Jesus spoke these words. Besides, it is difficult, on this view, to explain satisfactorily the *βιασταί*, *violent ones*, mentioned immediately afterward.

6. Stier combines a good and a bad sense in the use of *βιάζεται*: "The word has here no more and no less than its active sense, which passes into the middle. The kingdom of heaven proclaims itself *loudly and openly, breaking in with violence;* the poor are compelled (Luke xiv, 23) to enter it; those who oppose it are *constrained to take offence.* In short, all things proceed urgently with it; it goes with mighty movement and impulse; it works effectually

[1] Commentary, in loco.

upon all spirits on both sides and on all sides. . . . Its constraining power does violence to all; but it excites, at the same time, in the case of many, obstinate opposition. He who will not submit to it, must be offended and resist; and he, too, who yields to it, must press and struggle through this offence. Thus the kingdom of heaven *does* and *suffers* violence, *both* in its twofold influence."[1] Hence, according to Stier, the *violent ones* are either good or bad, since both classes are compelled to take some part in the general struggle, either for or against. This exposition, however, is without sufficient warrant in the history of the time, "from the days of John the Baptist until now," and it puts too many shades of meaning on the word *βιασταί*. Besides, this view also has no clear relevancy to the context.

7. We believe the true view will be attained only by giving each word its natural meaning, and keeping attention strictly to the context. The common meaning of *βιάζω* is to *take something by force*, to *carry by storm*, as a besieged city or fortress; and it here refers most naturally to the violent and hasty efforts to seize upon the kingdom of God which had been conspicuous since the beginning of the ministry of John. For this view seems to be demanded by the context. John had heard, in his prison, about the works of Christ, and, anxious and impatient for the glorious manifestation of the Messiah, sent two of his disciples to put the dubious question, "Art thou he that is coming, or look we for another?" (Matt. xi, 2, 3). Jesus' answer (verses 4–6) was merely a statement of his mighty works, and of the preaching of the Gospel to the poor—Old Testament prophetic evidence that the days of the Messiah were at hand—and the tacit rebuke: "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended (*σκανδαλισθῇ find occasion of stumbling*) in me," was evidently meant for John's impatience. When John's disciples went away Jesus at once proceeded to speak of John's character and standing before the multitudes: When ye all flocked to the wilderness to hear John preach, did ye expect to find a wavering reed, or a finely dressed courtier? Or did ye expect, rather, to see a prophet? Yes, he exclaims, much more than a prophet. For he was the Messiah's messenger, himself prophesied of in the Scriptures (Mal. iii, 1). He was greater than all the prophets who were before him; for he stood upon the very verge of the Messianic era and introduced the Christ. But, with all his greatness, he misunderstands the kingdom of heaven; and from his days until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence from many who, like him, think it may be forced into manifestation. That king-

[1] Words of the Lord Jesus, in loco.

dom comes according to an ordered progress. First, the prophets and the law until John—the Elijah foretold in Mal. iv, 5. John was but the forerunner of Christ, preparing his way, and Christ's manifestation in the flesh was not his coming in his kingdom. Herein, we think, expositors have generally misapprehended our Lord's doctrine. Thus Nast: "The Lord speaks of the absolutely certain and momentous fact that the kingdom of heaven has come, proclaims its presence, and sends forth its invitations in tones not to be misunderstood (verse 15)."[1] We believe, on the contrary, that this is a grave misunderstanding of our Lord's words. He neither says, nor necessarily implies, that his kingdom *has come*. John's preaching and Christ's preaching alike declared the kingdom to be at hand, and not fully come. Compare Matt. iii, 2 and iv, 17. But from the beginning of this gospel men had been over anxious to have the kingdom itself appear, and in this sense it was suffering violence, both by an inward impatience and zeal, such as John himself had just now exhibited, and by an open and outward clamour, such as was exhibited by those who would fain have taken Jesus by force and made him king (John vi, 15). This same kind of violence is to be understood in the parallel passage in Luke xvi, 16. The preaching of "the Gospel of the kingdom" was the occasion of a violence of attitude regarding it. Every man would fain enter violently into it.

The word *βιάζεται*, accordingly, denotes not altogether a hostile violence, nor yet, on the other hand, a commendable zeal; but it may combine in a measure both of these conceptions. Stier finely says: "In a case where exegesis perseveringly disputes which of the two views of a passage capable of two senses is correct, it is generally found that both are one in a third deeper meaning, and that the disputants in both cases have both right and wrong in their argument."[2] The word in question may combine both the good and the bad senses of violence: not, however, in the manner in which Stier explains, as above, but as depicting the violent zeal of those who would hurry the kingdom of God into a premature manifestation. Such a zeal might be laudable in its general aim, but very mistaken in its spirit and plan, and therefore deserving of rebuke.

Gal. v, 4, to be explained by immediate context.

The context of Gal. v, 4, must be studied in order to apprehend the force and scope of the words: "Ye are fallen away from grace." The apostle is contrasting justification by faith in Christ with justification by an observance of the law, and he argues that these two are opposites, so that one

[1] English Commentary on Matthew, in loco.

[2] Words of the Lord Jesus, on Matt. xi, 12.

necessarily excludes the other. He who receives circumcision as a means of justification (verse 2) virtually excludes Christ, whose gospel calls for no such work. If one seeks justification in a law of works, he binds himself to keep the whole law (verse 3); for then not circumcision only, but the whole law, must be minutely observed. Then, with a marked emphasis and force of words, he adds: "Ye were severed from Christ, whoever of you are being (assuming to be) justified in law, ye fell away from grace." Ye cut yourselves off from the system of grace (*τῆς χάριτος*). The word *grace*, then, is here to be understood not as a gracious attainment of personal experience, but as the gospel system of salvation. From this system they apostatized who sought justification in law.

It will be obvious from the above that the connexion of thought in any given passage may depend on a variety of considerations. It may be a *historical* connexion, in that facts or events recorded are connected in a chronological sequence. It may be *historico-dogmatic*, in that a doctrinal discourse is connected with some historic fact or circumstance. It may be a *logical* connexion, in that the thoughts or arguments are presented in logical order; or it may be *psychological*, because dependent on some association of ideas. This latter often occasions a sudden breaking off from a line of thought, and may serve to explain some of the parenthetical passages and instances of *anacoluthon* so frequent in the writings of Paul.

The connexion may be historical, historico-dogmatic, logical, or psychological.

Too much stress cannot well be laid upon the importance of closely studying the context, scope, and plan. Many a passage of Scripture will not be understood at all without the help afforded by the context; for many a sentence derives all its point and force from the connexion in which it stands. So, again, a whole section may depend, for its proper exposition, upon our understanding the scope and plan of the writer's argument. How futile would be a proof text drawn from the Book of Job unless, along with the citation, it were observed whether it were an utterance of Job himself, or of one of his three friends, or of Elihu, or of the Almighty! Even Job's celebrated utterance in chapter xix, 25–27, should be viewed in reference to the scope of the whole book, as well as to his intense anguish and emotion at that particular stage of the controversy.[1]

Importance of studying the context, scope, and plan.

[1] Some religious teachers are fond of employing scriptural texts simply as mottoes, with little or no regard to their true connexion. Thus they too often adapt them to their use by imparting to them a factitious sense foreign to their proper scope and meaning. The seeming gain in all such cases is more than counterbalanced by the loss and danger that attend the practice. It encourages the habit of interpreting

Critical tact and ability needed.

"In considering the connexion of parts in a section," says Davidson, "and the amount of meaning they express, acuteness and critical tact are much needed. We may be able to tell the significations of single terms, and yet be utterly inadequate to unfold a continuous argument. A capacity for verbal analysis does not impart the talent of expounding an entire paragraph. Ability to discover the proper causes, the natural sequence, the pertinency of expressions to the subject discussed, and the delicate distinctions of thought which characterize particular kinds of composition, is distinct from the habit of carefully tracing out the various senses of separate terms. It is a higher faculty; not the child of diligence, but rather of original, intellectual ability. Attention may sharpen and improve, but cannot create it. All men are not endowed with equal acuteness, nor fitted to detect the latent links of associated ideas by their outward symbols. They cannot alike discern the idiosyncrasies of various writers as exhibited in their composition. But the verbal philologist is not necessarily incapacitated by converse with separate signs of ideas from unfolding the mutual bearings of an entire paragraph. Imbued with a philosophic spirit, he may successfully trace the connexion subsisting between the various parts of a book, while he notes the commencement of new topics, the propriety of their position, the interweaving of argumentation, interruptions and digressions, and all the characteristic peculiarities exhibited in a particular composition. In this he may be mightily assisted by a just perception of those particles which have been designated ἔπεα πτερόεντα [winged words], not less than by sympathy with the spirit of the author whom he seeks to understand. By placing himself as much as possible in the circumstances of the writer, and contemplating from the same elevation the important phenomena to which his rapt mind was directed, he will be in a favourable position for understanding the parts and proportions of a connected discourse."[1]

Scripture in an arbitrary and fanciful way, and thus furnishes the teachers of error with their most effective weapon. The practice cannot be defended on any plea of necessity. The plain words of Scripture, legitimately interpreted according to their proper scope and context, contain a fulness and comprehensiveness of meaning sufficient for the wants of all men in all circumstances. That piety alone is robust and healthful which is fed, not by the fancies and speculations of the preacher who practically puts his own genius above the word of God, but by the pure doctrines and precepts of the Bible, unfolded in their true connexion and meaning. Barrows, Introduction to the Study of the Bible, p. 455.

[1] Sacred Hermeneutics, p. 240.

CHAPTER VII.

COMPARISON OF PARALLEL PASSAGES.

Some parts of Scripture without logical context.

THERE are portions of Scripture in the exposition of which we are not to look for help in the context or scope. The Book of Proverbs, for example, is composed of numerous separate aphorisms, many of which have no necessary connection with each other. The book itself is divisible into several collections of proverbs; and separate sections, like that concerning the evil woman in chapter vii, and the words of wisdom in chapters viii and ix, have a unity and completeness in themselves, through which a connected train of thought is discernible. But many of the proverbs are manifestly without connexion with what precedes or follows. Thus the twentieth and twenty-first chapters of Proverbs may be studied ever so closely, and no essential connexion of thought appears to hold any two of the verses together. The same will be found true of other portions of this book, which from its very nature is a collection of apothegms, each one of which may stand by itself as a concise expression of aphoristic wisdom. Several parts of the Book of Ecclesiastes consist of proverbs, soliloquies, and exhortations, which appear to have no vital relation to each other. Such, especially, are to be found in chapters v–x. Accordingly, while the scope and general subject-matter of the entire book are easily discerned, many eminent critics have despaired of finding in it any definite plan or logical arrangement. The Gospels, also, contain some passages which it is impossible to explain as having any essential connexion with either that which precedes or follows.

Value of parallel passages.

On such isolated texts, as also on those not so isolated, a comparison of parallel passages of Scripture often throws much light. For words, phrases, and historical or doctrinal statements, which in one place are difficult to understand, are often set forth in clear light by the additional statements with which they stand connected elsewhere. Thus, as shown above (pp. 113–116), the comparatively isolated passage in Luke xvi, 16, is much more clear and comprehensive when studied in the light of its context in Matt. xi, 12. Without the help of parallel passages, some words and statements of the Scripture would scarcely be intelligible. As we ascertain the *usus loquendi* of words from a wide collation of passages

in which they occur, so the sense of an entire passage may be elucidated by a comparison with its parallel in another place. "The employment of parallel passages," says Immer, "must go hand in hand with attention to the connexion. The mere explanation according to the connexion often fails to secure the certainty that is desired, at least in cases where the linguistic usage under consideration and the analogous thought cannot at the same time be otherwise established."[1]

"In comparing parallels," says Davidson, "it is proper to observe a certain order. In the first place we should seek for parallels in the writings of the same author, as the same peculiarities of conception and modes of expression are liable to return in different works proceeding from one person. There is a certain configuration of mind which manifests itself in the productions of one man. Each writer is distinguished by a style more or less his own; by characteristics which would serve to identify him with the emanations of his intellect, even were his name withheld. Hence the reasonableness of expecting parallel passages in the writings of one author to throw most light upon each other."[2]

The Bible a self-interpreting book.

But we should also remember that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are a world by themselves. Although written at sundry times, and devoted to many different themes, taken altogether they constitute a self-interpreting book. The old rule, therefore, that "Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture," is a most important principle of sacred hermeneutics. But we must avoid the danger of overstepping in this matter. Some have gone too far in trying to make Daniel explain the Revelation of John, and it is equally possible to distort a passage in Kings or in Chronicles by attempting to make it parallel with some statement of Paul. In general we may expect to find the most valuable parallels in books of the same class. Historical passages will be likely to be paralleled with historical, prophetic with prophetic, poetic with poetic, and argumentative and hortatory with those of like character. Hosea and Amos will be likely to have more in common than Genesis and Proverbs; Matthew and Luke will be expected to be more alike than Matthew and one of the Epistles of Paul, and Paul's Epistles naturally exhibit many parallels both of thought and language.

Nor should we overlook the fact that almost all we know of the history of the Jewish people is embodied in the Bible. The apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books and the works of Josephus are the principal outside sources. These different books may, then, be

[1] Hermeneutics of the New Testament, p. 159. [2] Hermeneutics, p. 251.

fairly expected to interpret themselves. Their spirit and purpose, their modes of thought and expression, their doctrinal teachings, and, to some extent, their general subject-matter, would be naturally expected to have a self-conformity. When, upon examination, we find that this is the case, we shall the more fully appreciate the importance of comparing all parallel portions and reading them in each other's light.

Parallels verbal and real.

Parallel passages have been commonly divided into two classes, *verbal* and *real*, according as that which constitutes the parallel consists in words or in like subject-matter. Where the same word occurs in similar connexion, or in reference to the same general subject, the parallel is called verbal. The use of such parallel passages has been shown above in determining the meaning of words.[1] Real parallels are those similar passages in which the likeness or identity consists, not in words or phrases, but in facts, subjects, sentiments, or doctrines. Parallels of this kind are sometimes subdivided into historic and didactic, according as the subject-matter consists of historical events or matters of doctrine. But all these divisions are, perhaps, needless refinements. The careful expositor will consult all parallel passages, whether they be verbal, historical, or doctrinal; but in actual interpretation he will find little occasion to discriminate formally between these different classes.

Parallels must have a real correspondency.

The great thing to determine, in every case, is whether the passages adduced are really parallel. A verbal parallel may be as real as one that embodies many corresponding sentiments, for a single word is often decisive of a doctrine or a fact. On the other hand, there may be a likeness of sentiment without any real parallelism. Proverbs xxii, 2, and xxix, 13, are usually taken as parallels, but a close inspection will show that though there is a marked similarity of sentiment, there is no essential identity or real parallelism. The first passage is: "Rich and poor meet together; maker of all of them is Jehovah." We need not assume that this *meeting together* is in the grave (Conant) or in the *conflicts* (נִפְגָּשׁוּ) of life in a hostile sense. The second passage, properly rendered, is: "The poor and the man of oppressions meet together; an enlightener of the eyes of both of them is Jehovah." Here the *man of oppressions* is not necessarily a rich man; nor is *enlightener of the eyes* an equivalent of *maker* in xxii, 2. Hence, all that can be properly said of these two passages is, that they are similar in sentiment, but not strictly parallel or identical in sense.

[1] See above, pages 84, 85.

A careful comparison of the parables of the talents (Matt. xxv, 14–30) and of the pounds (Luke xix, 11–27) will show that they have much in common, together with not a few things that are different. They were spoken at different times, in different places, and to different hearers. The parable of the talents deals only with the servants of the lord who went into a far country; that of the pounds deals also with his citizens and enemies who would not have him reign over them. Yet the great lesson of the necessity of diligent activity for the Lord in his absence is the same in both parables.

The word *hate* illustrated by parallel passages.

A comparison of parallel passages is necessary in order to determine the sense of the word *hate* in Luke xiv, 26: "If any one comes unto me, and hates not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, and even his own life besides, he cannot be my disciple." This statement appears at first to contravene the fifth commandment of the decalogue, and also to involve other unreasonable demands. It seems to stand opposed to the Gospel doctrine of love. But, turning to Matt. x, 37, we find the statement in a milder form, and woven in a context which serves to disclose its full force and bearing. There the statement is: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." The immediate context of this verse (verses 34–39), a characteristic passage of our Lord's more ardent utterances, sets its meaning in a clear light. "Do not think," he says, verse 34, "that I came to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace but a sword." He sees a world lying in wickedness, and exhibiting all forms of opposition to his messages of truth. With such a world he can make no compromise, and have no peace without, first, a bitter conflict. Such conflict he, therefore, purposely invites. He will conquer a peace, or else have none at all. "The telic style of expression is not only rhetorical, indicating that the result is unavoidable, but what Jesus expresses is a purpose—not the final design of his coming, but an intermediate purpose—in seeing clearly presented to his view the reciprocally hostile excitement as a necessary transition, which he therefore, in keeping with his destiny as Messiah, must be sent first of all to bring forth."[1] Before his final purpose is accomplished he sees what bitter strifes must come; but the grand result will be well worth all the intermediate woes. Therefore he will call father, mother, child, although it cause many household divisions; and so he adds, as explaining how he will send

Matt. x, 34–39.

[1] Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, in loco.

a sword rather than peace: "For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." When this state of things shall come to pass, how many will be called upon to decide whether they will cleave to Christ, or to an unchristian father? Micah's words (vii, 6) will then be true. Son will oppose father, daughter will rise up against mother, and if one remains true to the Lord Christ, he will have to forsake his own household and kin. He cannot be a true disciple and love his parents or children more than Christ. Hence he must needs set them aside, forsake them, love them less, and even oppose them, assuming toward them the hostile attitude of an enemy for Christ's sake. The import of *hate*, in Luke xiv, 26, is accordingly made clear.

This peculiar meaning of the word is further confirmed by its use in Matt. vi, 24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Two masters, so opposite in nature as God and Mammon, cannot be loved and served at one and the same time. The love of the one necessarily excludes the love of the other, and neither will be served with a divided heart. In the case of such essential opposites, a lack of love for one amounts to a disloyal enmity—the root of all hatred. Another parallel, illustrative of this impressive teaching, is to be found in Deut. xiii, 6–11, where it is enjoined that, if brother, son, daughter, wife, or friend entice one to idolatry, he shall not only not consent, but he shall not have pity on the seducer, and shall take measures to have him publicly punished as an enemy of God and his people. Hence we derive the lesson that one who opposes our love and loyalty to God or Christ is the worst possible enemy. Compare also John xii, 25; Rom. ix, 13; Mal. i, 2, 3; Deut. xxi, 15.

Matt. vi, 24.

The true interpretation of Jesus' words to Peter, in Matt. xvi, 18, will be fully apprehended only by a comparison and careful study of all the parallel texts. Jesus says to Peter, "Thou art Peter (*πέτρος*), and upon this *petra* (or *rock*, *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ*), will I build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against her." How is it possible from this passage alone to decide whether the rock (*πέτρα*) refers to Christ (as Augustine and Wordsworth), or to Peter's confession (Luther and many Protestant divines), or to Peter himself? It is noticeable that in the parallel passages of Mark (viii, 27–30) and Luke (ix, 18–21) these words of Christ to Peter do not occur. The

Peter a living stone. Matt. xvi, 16–18.

immediate context presents us with Simon Peter, as the spokesman and representative of the disciples, answering Jesus' question with the bold and confident confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus was evidently moved by the fervid words of Peter, and said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood revealed it not to thee, but my Father who is in the heavens." Whatever knowledge and convictions of Jesus' messiahship and divinity the disciples had attained before, this noble confession of Peter possessed the newness and glory of a special revelation. It was not the offspring of "flesh and blood," that is, not of natural human birth or origin, but the spontaneous outburst of a divine inspiration from heaven. Peter was for the moment caught up by the Spirit of God, and, in the glowing fervour of such inspiration, spoke the very word of the Father. He was accordingly pronounced the blessed (*μακάριος*) or happy one.

John i, 41–43 compared.

Turning now to the narrative of Simon's introduction to the Saviour (John i, 41–43), we compare the first mention of the name Peter. He was led into the presence of Jesus by his own brother Andrew, and Jesus, gazing on him, said, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter" (*πέτρος*). Thus, at the beginning, he tells him what he *is* and what he *shall be*. A doubtful character at that time was Simon, the son of Jonah; irritable, impetuous, unstable, irresolute; but Jesus saw a coming hour when he would become the bold, strong, abiding, memorable stone (Peter), the typical and representative confessor of the Christ. Reverting again to the passage in Matthew, it is easy to see that, through his inspired confession of the Christ, the Son of the living God, Simon has attained the ideal foreseen and foretold by his Lord. He has now become *Peter* indeed; now "thou *art* Peter," not "shalt be called Peter." Accordingly, we cannot avoid the conviction that the manifest play on the words *petros* and *petra* (in Matt. xvi, 18,) has a designed and important significance, and also an allusion to the first bestowal of the name on Simon (John i, 43); as if the Lord had said: Remember, Simon, the significant name I gave thee at our first meeting. Then I said, *Thou shalt be called Peter;* now I say unto thee, *Thou art Peter.*

Petros and petra.

But there is doubtless a designed significance in the change from *petros* to *petra*, in Matt. xvi, 18. It is altogether probable that there was a corresponding change in the Aramaic words used by our Lord on this occasion. He may, perhaps, have employed merely the simple and emphatic forms of the Aramaic word *Cephas* (כֵּיפָא and כֵּיף). What, then, is meant by

the πέτρα, *petra*, on which Christ builds his Church? In answering this question we inquire what other scriptures say about the building of the Church, and in Eph. ii, 20–22 we find it written that Christian believers constitute "the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, grows unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Having made the natural and easy transition from the figure of a household to that of the structure in which the household dwells, the apostle speaks of the latter as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." The *prophets* here intended are doubtless the New Testament prophets referred to in chapters iii, 5 and iv, 11.

Ephesians ii, 20–22 compared.

The foundation OF the apostles and prophets has been explained (1) as a genitive of *apposition*—the foundation which is constituted of apostles and prophets; that is, the apostles and prophets are themselves the foundation (so Chrysostom, Olshausen, De Wette, and many others); (2) as a genitive of the *originating cause*—the foundation laid by the apostles (Calvin, Koppe, Harless, Meyer, Eadie, Ellicott); (3) as a genitive of *possession*—the apostles and prophets' foundation, that is, the foundation upon which they as well as all other believers are builded (Beza, Bucer, Alford). We believe that in the breadth and fulness of the apostle's conception, there is room for all these thoughts, and a wider comparison of Scripture corroborates this view. In Gal. ii, 9, James, Cephas, and John are spoken of as *pillars* (στῦλοι), foundation-pillars, or columnar supports of the Church. In the apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem, which is "the bride, the wife of the Lamb" (Rev. xxi, 9), it is said that "the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and upon them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. xxi, 14). Here it is evident that the apostles are conceived as foundation-stones, forming the substructure of the Church; and with this conception "the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. ii, 20) may be taken as genitive of apposition. But in 1 Cor. iii, 10, the apostle speaks of himself as a wise architect, laying a foundation (θεμέλιον ἔθηκα, *a foundation I laid*). Immediately after (verse 11) he says: "Other foundation can no one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." This foundation Paul himself laid when he founded the Church of Corinth, and first made known there the Lord Jesus Christ. Having once laid this foundation, no man could lay another, although he

Foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Rev. xxi, 14.

1 Cor. iii, 10.

might build thereupon. Paul himself could not have laid another had some one else been first to lay this foundation in Corinth (compare Rom. xv, 20). How he laid this foundation he tells in chap. ii, 1–5, especially when he says (verse 2) "I determined not to know any thing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified." So then, in this sense, Ephesians ii, 20 may be taken as genitive of the originating cause—the foundation which the apostles laid. At the same time we need not overlook or ignore the fact presented in 1 Cor. iii, 11, that Jesus is himself the foundation, that is, Jesus Christ—including his person, work, and doctrine—is the great fact on which the Church is builded, and without which there could be no redemption. Hence the Church itself, according to 1 Tim. iii, 15, is the "pillar and basis (ἑδραίωμα) of the truth." Accordingly we hold that the expression "foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. ii, 20) has a fulness of meaning which may include all these thoughts. The apostles were themselves incorporated in this foundation, and made pillars or foundation stones: they, too, were instrumental in laying this foundation and building upon it; and having laid it in Christ, and working solely through Christ, without whom they could do nothing, Jesus Christ himself, as preached by them, was also conceived as the underlying basis and foundation of all (1 Cor. iii, 11).

1 Peter ii, 4, 5, compared.

Another Scripture, in 1 Peter ii, 4, 5, should also be collated here, for it was written by the apostle to whom the words of Matt. xvi, 18, were addressed, and seems to have been with him a thought that lingered like a precious memory in the soul: "To whom (i. e., the gracious Lord just mentioned) approaching, a living stone, by men indeed disallowed, but before God chosen, precious, do ye also yourselves, as living stones, be built up a spiritual house." Here the Lord is himself presented as the elect and precious corner-stone (comp. verse 6), and at the same time Christian believers are also represented as living stones, built into the same spiritual temple.

Coming back now to the text in Matt. xvi, 18, which Schaff pronounces "one of the profoundest and most far-reaching prophetical, but, at the same time, one of the most controverted, sayings of the Saviour,"[1] we are furnished, by the above collation of cognate Scriptures, with the means of apprehending its true import and significance. Filled with a divine inspiration, Peter confessed his Lord Christ, to the glory of God the Father (compare 1 John iv, 15, and Rom. x, 9), and in that blessed attainment and confession he be-

[1] Lange's Commentary on Matthew, translated and annotated by Philip Schaff, p. 293. New York, 1864. Compare also Meyer, Alford, and Nast, in loco.

came the representative or ideal Christian confessor. In view of this, Jesus says to him: Now thou art Peter; thou art become a living stone, the type and representative of the multitude of living stones upon which I will build my Church. The change from the masculine πέτρος to the feminine πέτρα fittingly indicates that it is not so much on Peter, the man, the single and separate individual, as on Peter considered as the confessor, the type and representative of all other Christian confessors, who are to be "builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii, 22).

Error of the common Protestant interpretation of πέτρα.

In the light of all these Scriptures we may see the impropriety and irrelevancy of what has been the prevailing Protestant interpretation, namely, making the πέτρα, *rock*, to be Peter's confession. "Every building," says Nast, "must have foundation stones. What is the foundation of the Christian Church *on the part of man?* Is it not—what Peter exhibited—a faith wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and a confession with the mouth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? But this believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth is something personal; it cannot be separated from the living personality that believes and confesses. The Church consists of living men, and its foundation cannot be a mere abstract truth or doctrine apart from the living personality in which it is embodied. This is in accordance with the whole New Testament language, in which not doctrines or confessions, but men, are uniformly called pillars or foundations of the spiritual building."[1]

It is well known how large a portion of the three synoptic Gospels consists of parallel narratives of the words and works of

[1] Commentary on the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, in loco. To the Roman Catholic interpretation, which explains these words as investing Peter and his successors with a permanent primacy at Rome, Schaff opposes the following insuperable objections: (1) It obliterates the distinction between *petros* and *petra;* (2) it is inconsistent with the true nature of the architectural figure: the foundation of a building is one and abiding, and not constantly renewed and changed; (3) it confounds priority of time with permanent superiority of rank; (4) it confounds the apostolate, which, strictly speaking, is not transferable, but confined to the original personal disciples of Christ and inspired organs of the Holy Spirit, with the post-apostolic episcopate; (5) it involves an injustice to the other apostles, who, as a body, are expressly called the foundation or foundation-stones of the Church; (6) it contradicts the whole spirit of Peter's epistles, which is strongly antihierarchical, and disclaims any superiority over his 'fellow-presbyters;' (7) finally, it rests on gratuitous assumptions which can never be proven either exegetically or historically, viz., the transferability of Peter's primacy, and its actual transfer upon the bishop, not of Jerusalem, nor of Antioch (where Peter certainly was), but of Rome exclusively." See Lange's Matthew, in loco, page 297.

Jesus. St. Paul's account of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection (xv, 4–7), and of the institution of the Lord's Supper (xi, 23–26), are well worthy of comparison with the several Gospel narratives.[1] The Epistles of Paul to the Romans and to the Galatians, being each so largely devoted to the doctrine of righteousness through faith, should be studied together, for they have many parallels which help to illustrate each other. Not a few parallel passages of the Ephesian and Colossian Epistles throw light upon each other. The second and third chapters of 2 Peter should be studied and expounded in connexion with the Epistle of Jude. The genealogies of Genesis, Chronicles, and Matthew and Luke, should be compared, as also large sections of the books of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. We have in the Acts of the Apostles three separate accounts of Paul's conversion (chaps. ix, xxii, and xxvi), and all these illustrate and supplement each other. The many passages of the Old Testament which are quoted or referred to in the New, are also parallels; but they are so specific in their nature as to call for special treatment in a future chapter.

Large portions of Scripture parallel.

[1] More than common discretion must be exercised by the interpreter of the New Testament with regard to the parallel passages in the Gospels, particularly in the synoptical Gospels. With respect to the latter chiefly, they often relate the same thing, sometimes they communicate the same conversation or saying of Jesus, but not in the same words. We have here, then, different accounts of the same occurrence or thing. But now the interpreter has no right to conclude from one evangelist to another without any limitation, and e. g. to explain and supplement the words of the Saviour, as recorded by one narrator, out of the account of another. For, in any difference in the accounts, the question is, *what* Jesus actually said. We must commence there, by making a distinction between what was actually said and what is communicated concerning it; and with this last the interpreter has to deal. For instance, according to Matt. vi, 11, Jesus taught them to pray in the "Lord's Prayer:" Give us "this day" our daily bread; according to Luke xi, 3: Give us "day by day," etc. Now we have no right to say: therefore, this day = day by day. In the same prayer Matthew has it: "as we forgive," etc. (thus, standard); Luke: "for we also forgive," etc. (thus, reason for hearing the prayer). Now we may not say that the one is equal to the other. In like manner, also, we may not explain 1 Cor. xiv and Acts ii, 4–13 out of each other, and so confound them with each other. In the latter passage there is indeed mention of other (strange) languages (*ἑτέραι γλῶσσαι*), in the former, on the contrary, not a word is said of "other" languages, but of tongues (*γλῶσσαι*); and in Acts ii the context of the narrative compels us quite as much to think of strange languages, as the context in 1 Cor. xiv decidedly forbids it.—Doedes, Manual of Hermeneutics, pp. 100, 101.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORICAL STANDPOINT.

Importance of the historical standpoint.

It is of the first importance, in interpreting a written document, to ascertain who the author was, and to determine the time, the place, and the circumstances of his writing. The interpreter should, therefore, endeavour to take himself from the present, and to transport himself into the historical position of his author, look through his eyes, note his surroundings, feel with his heart, and catch his emotion. Herein we note the import of the term grammatico-*historical* interpretation. We are not only to grasp the grammatical import of words and sentences, but also to feel the force and bearing of the historical circumstances which may in any way have affected the writer. Hence, too, it will be seen how intimately connected may be the object or design of a writing and the occasion which prompted its composition. The individuality of the writer, his local surroundings, his wants and desires, his relation to those for whom he wrote, his nationality and theirs, the character of the times when he wrote—all these matters are of the first importance to a thorough interpretation of the several books of Scripture.

Extensive historical knowledge necessary.

A knowledge of geography, history, chronology, and antiquities, has already been mentioned as an essential qualification of the biblical interpreter.[1] Especially should he have a clear conception of the order of events connected with the whole course of sacred history, such as the contemporaneous history, so far as it may be known, of the great nations and tribes of patriarchal times; the great world-powers of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, with which the Israelites at various times came in contact; the Macedonian Empire, with its later Ptolemaic and Seleucidaic branches, from which the Jewish people suffered many woes, and the subsequent conquest and dominion of the Romans. The exegete should be able to take his standpoint anywhere along this line of history wherever he may find the age of his author, and thence vividly grasp the outlying circumstances. He should seek a familiarity with the customs, life, spirit, ideas, and pursuits of these different times and different tribes and

[1] See above, pp. 26, 27.

nations, so as to distinguish readily what belonged to one and what to another. By such knowledge he will be able not only to transport himself into any given age, but also to avoid confounding the ideas of one age or race with those of another.

To transfer oneself vividly into the remote past not easy.

It is not an easy task for one to disengage himself from the living present, and thus transport himself into a past age. As we advance in general knowledge, and attain a higher civilization, we unconsciously grow out of old habits and ideas. We lose the spirit of the olden times, and become filled with the broader generalization and more scientific procedures of modern thought. The immensity of the universe, the vast accumulations of human study and research, the influence of great civil and ecclesiastical institutions, and the power of traditional sentiment and opinions, govern and shape our modes of thought to an extent we hardly know. To tear oneself away from these, and go back in spirit to the age of Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or Ezra, or of Matthew and Paul, and assume the historic standpoint of any of those writers, so as to see and feel as they did—this surely is no easy task. Yet, if we truly catch the spirit and feel the living force of the ancient oracles of God, we need to apprehend them somewhat as they first thrilled the hearts of those for whom they were immediately given.

Undue exaltation of biblical saints to be avoided.

Not a few devout readers of the Bible are so impressed with exalted ideas of the glory and sanctity of the ancient worthies, that they are liable to take the record of their lives in an unnatural light. To some it is difficult to believe that Moses and Paul were not acquainted with the events of modern times. The wisdom of Solomon, they imagine, must have comprehended all that man can know. Isaiah and Daniel must have discerned all future events as clearly as if they had already occurred. The writers of the New Testament must have known what a history and an influence their lifework would possess in after ages. To such minds the names of Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, Jephthah, and Samson, are so associated with holy thoughts and supernatural revelations that they half forget that they were men of like passions with ourselves. Such an undue exaltation of the sanctity of the biblical saints will be likely to interfere with a true historical exposition. The divine call and inspiration of prophets and apostles did not nullify or set aside their natural human powers, and the biblical interpreter should not allow his vision to be so dazzled by the glory of their divine mission as to make him blind to facts of their history. Abraham's cunning and deceit, conspicuous also in Isaac and Jacob, Moses'

hasty passions, and the barbarous brutality of most of the judges and kings of Israel, are not to be explained away. They are facts which the interpreter must fully recognize; and the more fully and vividly all such facts are realized and set in their true light and bearing, the more accurately shall we apprehend the real import of the Scriptures.

In the exposition of the Psalms, one of the first things to inquire after is the personal standpoint of the author. "The historical occasions of the Psalms," says Hibbard, "have ever been regarded, by judicious commentators, as important aids to their interpretation, and the full exhibition of their beauty and power. In the explanation of a work on exact science, or of a metaphysical essay, no importance is attached to the external circumstances and place of the author at the time of writing. In such a case the work has no relation to passing events, but to the abstract and essential relations of things. Very different is the language of poetry, and indeed of almost all such books as the sacred Scriptures are, which were at first addressed to a particular people, or to particular individuals, for their moral benefit, and much of them occupied with the personal experiences of their authors. Here occasion, contact with outward things, the influence of external circumstances and of passing events, play a conspicuous part in giving mould and fashion to the thoughts and feelings of the writer, scope and design to his subject, and meaning and pertinency to his words. It may be said of the Hebrew poets, as of those of all other nations, that the interpretation of their poetry is less dependent on verbal criticism than on sympathy with the feelings of the author, knowledge of his circumstances, and attention to the scope and drift of his utterances. You must place yourself in his condition, adopt his sentiments, and be floated onward with the current of his feelings, soothed by his consolations, or agitated by the storm of his emotions."[1]

Historical occasions of the Psalms.

Of many of the Psalms it is impossible now to determine the historical standpoint; but not a few of them are so clear in their allusions as to leave no reasonable doubt as to the occasion on which they were composed. There is, for example, no good reason for doubting the genuineness of the inscription to the third psalm, which refers the composition to David when he fled from the face of his son Absalom. "From verse 5 we gather," says Perowne, "that the psalm is a morning hymn. With returning day there comes back on the monarch's heart the recollection of

[1] The Psalms, Chronologically Arranged, with Historical Introductions, General Introduction, page 12. New York, 1856.

the enemies who threaten him—a nation up in arms against him, his own son heading the rebellion, his wisest and most trusted counsellor in the ranks of his foes (2 Sam. xv–xvii). Never, not even when hounded by Saul, had he found his position one of greater danger. The odds were overwhelmingly against him. This is a fact which he does not attempt to hide from himself: 'How *many* are mine enemies;' '*many* rise up against me;' '*many* say to my soul;' '*ten thousands* of the people have set themselves against me' (verses 1, 2, 6). Meanwhile, where are his friends, his army, his counsellors? Not a word of allusion to any of them in the psalm. Yet he is not crushed; he is not desponding. Enemies may be thick as the leaves of the forest, and earthly friends may be few, or uncertain, or far off. But there is one Friend who cannot fail him, and to him David turns with a confidence and affection which lift him above all his fears. Never had he been more sensible of the reality and preciousness of the divine protection. If he was surrounded by his enemies, Jehovah was his shield. If Shimei and his crew turned his glory into shame, Jehovah was his glory. If they sought to revile and degrade him, Jehovah was the lifter-up of his head. Nor did the mere fact of distance from Jerusalem separate between him and his God. He had sent back the ark and the priests, for he would not endanger their safety, and he did not trust in them as a charm, and he knew that Jehovah could still hear him from 'his holy mountain' (verse 4), could still lift up the light of his countenance upon him, and put gladness in his heart (Psa. iv, 6, 7). Sustained by Jehovah, he had laid him down and slept in safety; trusting in the same mighty protection he would lie down again to rest. Enemies might taunt him, (verse 2), and friends might fail him, but the victory was Jehovah's, and he could break the teeth of the ungodly" (iii, 7, 8).'

Consider the place as well as the time of the composition.

The historical standpoint of a writer is so often intimately connected with his situation at the date of writing, that both the time and the place of the composition should be considered together. The locality of the incidents recorded should also be closely studied and pictured before the mind. It adds much to one's knowledge and appreciation of biblical history to visit the lands trodden by patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. Seeing Palestine is, indeed, a fifth gospel. A personal visit to Beer-sheba, Hebron, Jerusalem, Joppa, Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee, affords a realistic sense of sacred narratives connected with these places such as cannot otherwise be had. The

[1] The Book of Psalms, New Translation, with Introductions and Notes. Introduction to Psalm iii. Andover, 1876.

decalogue and the laws of Moses become more awful and impressive when read upon Mount Sinai, and the Lord's agony in the garden thrills the soul with deeper emotion when meditated in the Kedron valley, beneath the old trees at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

What a vividness and reality appear in the Epistles of Paul when we study them in connexion with the account of his apostolic journeys and labours, and the physical and political features of the countries through which he passed! Setting out from Antioch on his second missionary tour, accompanied by Silas, he passed through Syria and Cilicia, visiting, doubtless, his early home at Tarsus (Acts xv, 40, 41). Thence he passed over the vast mountain-barrier on the north of Cilicia, and, after visiting Derbe and Lystra, where he attached Timothy to him as a companion in travel, he went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, where, notwithstanding his physical infirmity, he was received as an angel of God (Gal. iv, 13). Passing westward, and having been forbidden to preach in the western parts of Asia Minor (Acts xvi, 6), he came with his companions to Troas. "The district of Troas," observes Howson, "extending from Mt. Ida to the plain, watered by the Simois and the Scamander, was the scene of the Trojan War; and it was due to the poetry of Homer that the ancient name of Priam's kingdom should be retained. This shore had been visited on many memorable occasions by the great men of this world. Xerxes passed this way when he undertook to conquer Greece. Julius Cæsar was here after the battle of Pharsalia. But, above all, we associate this spot with a European conqueror of Asia, and an Asiatic conqueror of Europe, with Alexander of Macedon and Paul of Tarsus. For here it was that the enthusiasm of Alexander was kindled at the tomb of Achilles by the memory of his heroic ancestors; here he girded on his armour, and from this goal he started to overthrow the august dynasties of the East. And now the great apostle rests in his triumphal progress upon the same poetic shore; here he is armed by heavenly visitants with the weapons of a warfare that is not carnal, and hence he is sent forth to subdue all the powers of the West, and bring the civilization of the world into captivity to the obedience of Christ." [1]

Journeys and Epistles of Paul.

After the vision and the Macedonian call received at this place, he sailed from Troas and came to Neapolis, and thence to Philippi, the scene of many memorable events (Acts xvi, 12–40), and thence on through Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berea, to

[1] Conybeare and Howson, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, page 280. Fourth American Edition. New York, 1855.

Athens. There Paul waited, alone (comp. 1 Thess. iii, 1), for his companions, but failed not meanwhile to preach the Gospel to the inquisitive Athenians, "standing in the midst of the Areopagus" (Acts xvii, 22). After this he passed on to Corinth, and founded there the Church to which he subsequently addressed two of his most important epistles. From Corinth, soon after his arrival, he sent his first epistle to the Thessalonians. From this standpoint how lifelike and real are all the personal allusions and reminiscences of this his first epistle! But that letter, in its vivid allusions to the near coming of the Lord, awakened great excitement among the Thessalonians, and only a few months afterward we find him writing his second epistle to them to allay this trouble of their minds, and to assure them that that day is not so near but that several important events must first come to pass (2 Thess. ii, 1–8). A grouping of all these facts and suggestions adds vastly to one's interest in the study of Paul's epistles.

Without pursuing further the course of the apostles life and labours, enough has been said to show what light and interest a knowledge of the time and place of writing gives to the Epistles of Paul. The situation and condition of the churches and persons addressed in his epistles should also be carefully sought out. His subsequent epistles, especially those to the Corinthians, and those of his imprisonment, would be shorn of half their interest and value but for the knowledge we elsewhere obtain of the persons, incidents, and places to which references are made. What a tender charm hangs about the Epistle to the Philippians from our knowledge of the apostle's first experiences in that Roman colony, his subsequent visits there, and the thought that he is writing from his imprisonment in Rome, and making frequent mention of his bonds (Phil. i, 7, 13, 14), and of their former kindnesses toward him (iv, 15–18).[1]

Such inquiries silence infidel cavils.

Thorough inquiries into the narratives of Scripture have evinced the minute accuracy of the sacred writers, and silenced many cavils of infidelity. The treatise of James Smith on the Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul[2] furnishes an unanswerable argument for the authenticity of the Acts of the Apostles. The author's practical experience as a sailor, his residence at Malta, his familiar intercourse with the seamen of the Levant, and his study of the ships of the ancients, qualified him

[1] Stanley's History of the Jewish Church, Farrar's and Geikie's works on the Life of Christ, and Farrar's, Conybeare and Howson's, and Lewin's Life and Epistles of St. Paul, are especially rich in illustrations of the subject of this chapter.

[2] Third Edition. London, 1866.

pre-eminently to expound the last two chapters of the Acts. His volume is a monument of painstaking research, and throws more light upon the narrative of Paul's voyage from Cæsarea to Rome than all that had been written previously on that subject.[1]

The great importance of ascertaining the historical standpoint of an author is notably illustrated by the controversy over the date of the Apocalypse of John. If that prophetical book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, a number of its particular allusions must most naturally be understood as referring to that city and its fall. If, however, it was written at the end of the reign of Domitian (about A. D. 96), as many have believed, another system of interpretation is necessary to explain the historical allusions.

The historical standpoint of the Apocalypse.

Taking, first, the external evidence touching the date of the Apocalypse, it seems to us that no impartial mind can fail to see that it preponderates in favor of the later date. But when we scrutinize the character and extent of this evidence, it seems equally clear that no very great stress can safely be laid upon it. For it all turns upon the single testimony of Irenæus, who wrote, according to the best authorities, about one hundred years after the death of John, and who says that in boyhood he had seen and conversed with Polycarp, and heard him speak of his familiar intercourse with John.[2] This fact would, of course, make his testimony of peculiar value, but, at the same time, it should be borne in mind that at an early age he removed to

External testimony hangs on Irenæus.

[1] The following passage from Lewin is a noteworthy illustration of the value of personal research in refuting captious objections to the historical accuracy of the Bible. "It is objected to the account of the viper fastening upon Paul's hand," says Lewin, "that there is no wood in Malta, except at Bosquetta, and that there are no vipers in Malta. How, then, it is said, could the apostle have collected the sticks, and how could a viper have fastened upon his hand? But when I visited the Bay of St. Paul, in 1851, by sea, I observed trees growing in the vicinity, and there were also fig-trees growing among the rocks at the water's edge where the vessel was wrecked. But there is a better explanation still. When I was at Malta in 1853, I went with two companions to the Bay of St. Paul by land, and this was at the same season of the year as when the wreck occurred. We now noticed on the shore, just opposite the scene of the wreck, eight or nine stacks of small faggots, and in the nearest stack I counted twenty-five bundles. They consisted of a kind of thorny heather, and had evidently been cut for firewood. As we strolled about, my companions, whom I had quitted to make an observation, put up a viper, or a reptile having the appearance of one, which escaped into the bundle of sticks. It may not have been poisonous, but was like an adder, and was quite different from the common snake; one of my fellow-travellers was quite familiar with the difference between snakes and adders, and could not well be mistaken."—The Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, page 208.

[2] Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, book v, chap. xx.

the remote West, and became bishop of Lyons, in France, far from the associations of his early life. It would, therefore, have been no strange thing if he had somewhat confounded names and dates. His testimony is as follows: "We therefore do not run the risk of pronouncing positively concerning the name of the Antichrist [hidden in the number 666, Rev. xiii, 18], for if it were necessary to have his name distinctly announced at the present time, it would doubtless have been announced by him who saw the Apocalypse; for it is not a great while ago that it [or he] was seen (*οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸ πολλοῦ χρόνου ἑωράθη*), but almost in our own generation, toward the end of Domitian's reign."[1] Here it should be noted that the subject of the verb *ἑωράθη*, *was seen*, is ambiguous, and may be either *it*, referring to the Apocalypse, or *he*, referring to John himself. But allowing it to refer to the Apocalypse, we have then this testimony to the later date.

But what external testimony have we besides? Only Eusebius, who lived and wrote a hundred years after Irenæus, and who expressly quotes Irenæus as his authority.[2] He also quotes Clement of Alexandria as saying that "after the tyrant was dead" John returned from the isle of Patmos to Ephesus.[3] But it nowhere appears that Clement indicated who the tyrant was, or that he believed him to have been Domitian. It is Eusebius who puts that meaning in his words, and it is matter of notoriety that Eusebius himself, after quoting various opinions, leaves the question of the authorship of the Apocalypse in doubt.[4] Origen's testimony is also adduced, but he merely says that John was condemned by "the king of the Romans," not intimating at all who that king was, but calling attention to the fact that John himself did not name his persecutor. All other testimonies on the subject are later than these, and consequently of little or no value. If Eusebius was dependent on Irenæus for his information, it is not likely that later writers drew from any other source. But that the voice of antiquity was not altogether uniform on this subject may be inferred from the fact that an ancient fragment of a Latin document, probably as old as Irenæus' writings, mentions Paul as following the order of his predecessor John in writing to seven churches. The value of this ancient fragment is its evidence of a current notion that John's Apocalypse was written before the decease of Paul. Epiphanius dates John's banishment in the reign of Claudius Cæsar, and the superscription to the Syriac version of the Apocalypse

[1] Adversus Haereses, v, 30.

[2] See Eccles. History, book iii, 18 and v, 8. [3] Ibid., book iii, 23.

[4] See especially Alford's Prolegomena to the Revelation.

places it in the reign of Nero.[1] No one would lay great stress upon any of these later statements, but putting them all together, and letting the naked facts stand apart, shorn of all the artful colourings of partisan writers, we find the external evidence of John's writing the Apocalypse at the close of Domitian's reign resting on the sole testimony of Irenæus, who wrote a hundred years after that date, and whose words admit of two different meanings.

One clear and explicit testimony, when not opposed by other evidence, would be allowed by all fair critics to control the argument; but not so when many other considerations tend to weaken it. It would seem much easier to account for the confusion of tradition on the date of John's banishment than to explain away the definite references of the Apocalypse itself to the temple, the court, and the city as still standing when the book was written. All tradition substantially agrees, that John's last years of labour were spent among the churches of Western Asia, and it is very possible that he was banished to the isle of Patmos during the reign of Domitian. That banishment may have occurred long after John had gone to the same island for another reason, and later writers, misapprehending the apostle's words, might have easily confounded the two events.

John's own testimony.

John's own testimony is that he "was in the island which is called Patmos on account of the word of God (*διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*) and the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. i, 9). Alford says, though he does not adopt this meaning, that "in St. Paul's usage, *διά* would here signify *for the sake of*; that is, for the purpose of receiving; so that the apostle would have gone to Patmos [not as an exile, but] by special revelation in order to receive this Apocalypse. Again, keeping to this meaning of *διά*, these words may mean that he visited Patmos in pursuance of, for the purposes of, his ordinary apostolic employment, which might well be designated by these substantives."[2] This proper and all-suffi-

[1] See Stuart, Commentary on the Apocalypse, vol. i, pp. 265–269.

[2] Greek Testament, in loco. See also De Wette, in loco. Alford's "three objections" appear to us without force; for (1) the mention of *tribulation* and *patience* in this verse by no means requires us to understand that he was then suffering from banishment. (2) The parallels (chap. vi, 9; xx, 4) which he cites to determine the use of *διά* are offset by its use in ii, 3; iv, 11; xii, 11; xiii, 14; xviii, 10, 15, in all which places, as also in vi, 9 and xx, 4, it is to be understood as setting forth the *ground* or *reason* of what is stated. This meaning holds alike, whether we believe that John went to Patmos *freely* or as an exile, *on account* of the word of God. Comp. Winer, N. T. Grammar, § 49, on *διά*. (3) The traditional banishment of John to Patmos may have occurred, as we have shown above, long after he had first gone there on account of the testimony of Jesus.

cient explanation of his words allows us to suppose that John received the Revelation in Patmos, whither he had gone, either by some special divine call, or in pursuance of his apostolic labours. The tradition, therefore, of his exile under Domitian may be true, and at the same time not affect the question of the date of the Apocalypse.[1]

Internal evidence of date. Six points.

Turning now to inquire what internal evidence may be found touching the historical standpoint of the writer, observe: (1) That no critic of any note has ever claimed that the later date is required by any internal evidence. (2) On the contrary, if John the apostle is the author, the comparatively rough Hebraic style of the language unquestionably argues for it an earlier date than his Gospel or Epistles. For, special pleading aside, it must on all rational grounds be conceded, that a Hebrew, in the supposed condition of John, would, after years of intercourse and labour in the churches of Asia, acquire by degrees a purer Greek style. (3) The address "to the seven churches which are in Asia" (i, 4, 11), implies that, at this time, there were only seven churches in that Asia where Paul was once forbidden by the Spirit to speak the word (Acts xvi, 6, 7). Macdonald says, "An earthquake, in the ninth year of Nero's reign, overwhelmed both Laodicea and Colossæ (Pliny, Hist. Nat., v, 41), and the church at the latter place does not appear to have been restored. As the two places were in close proximity, what remained of the church at Colossæ probably became identified with the one at Laodicea. The churches at Tralles and Magnesia could not have been established until a considerable time after the Apocalypse was written. Those who contend for the later date, when there must have been a greater number of churches than seven in the region designated by the apostle, fail to give any sufficient reason for his mentioning no more. That they mystically or symbolically represent others is surely not such a reason."[2] (4) The prominence in which persecution from the Jews is set forth in the Epistles to the seven churches also argues an early date. After the fall of Jerusalem, Christian persecution and troubles came almost altogether from pagan sources, and Jewish opposition and Judaizing heretics became of little note.

[1] Any one who will compare the rapidity of Paul's movements on his missionary journeys, and note how he addressed epistles to some of his churches (e. g., Thessalonians) a few months after his first visitation, will have no difficulty in understanding how John could have visited all the seven churches of Asia, and also have gone thence to Patmos and received the Revelation, within a year after departing from Jerusalem. But John, like Paul, probably wrote to churches he had not visited.

[2] The Life and Writings of John, p. 155.

(5) A most weighty argument for the early date appears in the mention of the temple, court, and city in chapter xi, 1–3. These references and the further designation, in verse 8, of that city "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified," obviously imply that the Jewish temple, court, and city were yet standing. To plead that these familiar appellatives are not real, but only mystical allusions, is to assume the very point in question. The most simple reference should stand unless convincing reasons to the contrary be shown. When the writer proceeds to characterize the city by a proper symbolical name, he calls it Sodom and Egypt, and is careful to tell us that it is so called *spiritually* (πνευματικῶς), but, as if to prevent any possibility of misunderstanding his reference, he adds that it is the place where the Lord was crucified.

(6) Finally, what should especially impress every reader is the emphatic statement, placed in the very title of the book, and repeated in one form and another again and again, that this is a revelation of "things which must shortly (ἐν τάχει) come to pass," and the time of which is near at hand (ἐγγύς, Rev. i, 1, 3; xxii, 6, 7, 10, 12, 20). If the seer, writing a few years before the terrible catastrophe, had the destruction of Jerusalem and its attendant woes before him, all these expressions have a force and definiteness which every interpreter must recognize.[1] But if the things contem-

[1] The trend of modern criticism is unmistakably toward the adoption of the early date of the Apocalypse, and yet the best scholars differ. Elliott, Hengstenberg, Lange, Alford, and Whedon contend strongly that the testimony of Irenæus and the ancient tradition ought to control the question; while, on the other hand, Lücke, Neander, De Wette, Ewald, Bleek, Auberlen, Hilgenfeld, Düsterdieck, Stuart, Macdonald, Davidson, J. B. Lightfoot, Glasgow, Farrar, Westcott, Cowles, and Schaff maintain that the book, according to its own internal evidence, must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem. The last-named scholar, in the new edition of his Church History (vol. i, pp. 834–837), revokes his acceptance of the Domitian date which he affirmed thirty years ago, and now maintains that internal evidence for an earlier date outweighs the external tradition. Writers on both sides of this question have probably been too much influenced by some theory of the seven kings in chap. xvii, 10 (see below, p. 371), and have placed the composition much later than valid evidence warrants. Glasgow (The Apoc. Trans. and Expounded, pp. 9–38) adduces proof not easy to be set aside that the Revelation was written before any of the Epistles, probably somewhere between A. D. 50 and 54. Is it not supposable that one reason why Paul was forbidden to preach the word in Western Asia (Acts xvi, 6) was that John was either already there, or about to enter? The prevalent opinion that the First Epistle of John was written after the fall of Jerusalem rests on no certain evidence. To assume, from the writer's use of the term "little children," that he was very far advanced in years, is futile. John was probably no older than Paul, but some time before the fall of Jerusalem the latter was wont to speak of himself as "Paul the aged." Philem. 9.

plated were in the distant future, these simple words of time must be subjected to the most violent and unnatural treatment in order to make the statements of the writer compatible with the exposition.

Great delicacy and discrimination essential.

A consideration of these evidences, external and internal, of the date of the Apocalypse, shows what delicacy and discrimination are requisite in an interpreter in order to determine the historical standpoint of such a prophetical book. As far as possible, all systems of prophetical interpretation should be held in abeyance until that question is determined; but it may become necessary, in view of the conflicting evidences of the date and the difficulties of the book itself, to withhold all judgment as to the historical standpoint of the writer until we have tried the different methods of interpretation, and have thus had opportunity to judge which exposition affords the best solution of the difficulties.

This, then, is to be held as a canon of interpretation, that all due regard must be had to the person and circumstances of the author, the time and place of his writing, and the occasion and reasons which led him to write. Nor must we omit similar inquiry into the character, conditions, and history of those for whom the book was written, and of those also of whom the book makes mention.

PART SECOND.

SPECIAL HERMENEUTICS.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

While it is true that the Bible is to be interpreted like other books, and therefore requires attention to the laws of General Hermeneutics, it is also a notable fact that in many respects it differs from all other books. It contains many revelations in the form of types, symbols, parables, allegories, visions, and dreams. The poetry of the Hebrews is a special study in itself, and no one is competent to appreciate or expound it who has not become familiar both with its spirit and its formal elements. And what a wealth of figurative language in the Bible! "I am persuaded," wrote Sir William Jones, "that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written."[1] Special qualities of the Bible.

The Bible, moreover, is a textbook of religion, and its chief value is seen in the fact that it is divinely adapted to be profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. iii, 16). It is therefore of the highest importance to know to what extent these sacred instructions may be gathered from the written word, and to guard against false methods in the elaboration of scriptural doctrine. Some exegetes manifest a morbid desire to find "mountains of sense in every line of Holy Writ," and are constantly finding double meanings, recondite allusions, and marvellous revelations in the plainest passages. Others go to an opposite extreme, and not only eliminate the doctrines of the supernatural, but even refuse to recognize some of the most obvious lessons touching the unseen and eternal which are set forth on many a page. No faithful and permanently satis- Textbook of religion.

[1] Written on a blank leaf in his Bible.

factory exposition of the book of religious instruction is possible without a sound conception of the spiritual nature of man, and of faith in God as the means of religious life and growth.

Variety of subject matter and style.

It is also to be observed that the Holy Scriptures are the accretion of a literature that covers some sixteen centuries, and represents various authors and times of composition. These books embody biography, history, law, ritual, psalmody, drama, proverbs, prophecy, apocalypses, and epistles. Some were written by kings, others by shepherds, and prophets, and fishermen. One writer was a taxgatherer, another a tentmaker, another a physician. They lived and wrote at various periods, some of them centuries apart from others, and their places of residence were also far separate, as Arabia, Palestine, Babylon, Persia, Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. The antiquities and varying civilizations of different nations are imaged in these books, and when the name of an author is not known, it is usually not difficult to ascertain approximately, from his statements or allusions, the time and circumstances of his writing. The obvious result is that the Bible comprises a great diversity of literature, and the larger portion of it calls for special hermeneutics in its interpretation.

Distinction between substance and form.

It is an important part of the province of Special Hermeneutics to set forth the distinction between the essential thought of a writer and the form in which it is clothed. No little confusion has been introduced into biblical exposition by reason of a failure to make this discrimination. The faithful and true interpreter must imbibe the spirit of the author whom he would expound. If he would understand and explain Isaiah, he must not only transport himself into the age in which that prophet lived, but must also become possessed of some measure of his emotion when he bewailed the abominations of his time. And when, for example, the son of Amoz portrays the sinful nation as diseased in head and heart, and declares that from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, but rather wounds, and bruises, and raw sores (Isa. i, 6), we are not to insist on the full significance of each particular word. Such doleful utterances, even of inspired prophets, are likely to contain elements of oriental hyperbole, and may, at times, be coloured by the speaker's own despondency. A notable instance of this kind is the language of Elijah in 1 Kings xix, 10 (comp. verse 18), and it is probable that other prophets, although not fleeing for their lives, have sometimes expressed their heart-sorrow in a similar strain. When Isaiah in the name of Jehovah denounces the burnt offerings of Israel as an abomination (Isa. i, 11–14), we are not to rush to the conclusion that his language is

equivalent to a condemnation of animal sacrifices in general, nor does it warrant the opinion that the ritual of the sanctuary was not of divine appointment. The passage in Jer. vii, 21–26 has troubled some critics because of its apparent conflict with the recorded history of the exodus; but is not its real import best apprehended when we recognize it, not as a prosaic statement of historical fact, to be literally understood, but as an impassioned outburst of prophetic inspiration, designed to emphasize the utter worthlessness of sacrifice when made a substitute for obedience? Special Hermeneutics aims to find the proper analysis and import of such language of emotion. It must take cognizance both of the spirit and the forms of human speech, and distinguish correctly between them. In like manner must it treat of all which is special or peculiar in the Holy Scriptures, and which, accordingly, differentiates these writings from other compositions of men.[1]

Biblical Hermeneutics is a department of General Hermeneutics, and, as we have seen, calls in the main for the application of the general principles required in the interpretation of all literature. But as so large a portion of the Bible is composed of poetry and prophecy, and contains so many examples of parable, allegory, type, and symbol, it is proper in treating the science of biblical interpretation to devote more space to Special than to General Hermeneutics. Parables, allegories, types, and symbols, have their peculiar laws, and grammatico-historical interpretation must give attention to rhetorical form and prophetic symbolism, as well as to the laws of grammar and the facts of history.

The principles of Special Hermeneutics must be gathered from a faithful study of the Bible itself. We must observe the methods which the sacred writers followed. Naked propositions or formulated rules will be of little value unless supported and illustrated by self-verifying examples. It is worthy of note that the Scriptures furnish numerous instances of the interpretation of dreams, visions, types, symbols, and parables. In such examples we are to find our principles and laws of exposition. The Holy Scripture is no Delphic oracle, to bewilder the heart by utterances of double meaning. Taken as a whole, and allowed to speak for itself, the Bible will be found to be its own best interpreter.

The Bible its own best interpreter.

[1] The very peculiarities of the Bible have undoubtedly contributed largely to their enduring power over the human heart. "This volume," says "Phelps, has never numbered among its believers a fourth part of the human race, yet it has swayed a greater amount of mind than any other volume the world has known. It has the singular faculty of attracting to itself the thinkers of the world, either as friends or foes, always and every-where."—Men and Books, p. 239, New York, 1882.

CHAPTER II.

HEBREW POETRY.

Much of the Old Testament is composed in a style and form of language far above that of simple prose. The historical books abound in spirited addresses, odes, lyrics, psalms, and fragments of song. The books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, are highly poetical, and the prophetical books (נביאים אחרונים, *later prophets* of Hebrew Canon) are mainly of the same order. Nearly one half of the Old Testament is written in this poetic style. But the poetry of the Hebrews has peculiarities as marked and distinct from that of other nations as the language itself is different from other families of languages. Its metre is not that of syllables, but of sentences and sentiments. Properly speaking, Hebrew poetry knows nothing of metrical feet and versification analogous to the poetical form of the Indo-European tongues. The learned and ingenious attempts of some scholars to construct a system of Hebrew metres are now generally regarded as failures. There are discernible an elevated style, a harmony and parallelism of sentences, a sonorous flow of graphic words, an artificial arrangement of clauses, repetitions, transpositions, and rhetorical antitheses, which constitute the life of poetry. But the form is nowhere that of syllabic metre.[1] Some scholars have supposed that, since the Hebrew became a dead language, the ancient pronunciation is so utterly lost that it is therefore impossible now to discover or restore its ancient metres. But this, at best, is a doubtful hypothesis, and has all probabilities against it.

Old Testament largely poetical.

Not metrical in structure.

[1] On the subject of Hebrew poetry, see Lowth, Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, in Latin, with notes of Michaelis, Rosenmüller, and others (Oxford, 1828), and English Translation, edited by Stowe (Andover, 1829), and the Preliminary Dissertation to his Isaiah; Bellerman, Versuch über die Metrik der Hebräer (Berlin, 1813); Saalschutz, Form der hebräischen Poesie nebst einer Abhandlung über die Musik der Hebräer (Konigsb., 1825), and the same author's Form und Geist der hebräischen Poesie (1853); Ewald, die poetischen Bücher des alten Bundes, vol. i, Translated by Nicholson in Kitto's Journal of Sacred Literature for Jan. and April, 1848; Herder, Spirit of Hebrew Poetry, English Translation, in two vols., by James Marsh (Burlington, Vt., 1833); Isaac Taylor, The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry (Phila., 1873); De Wette, Introduction to his Commentar über die Psalmen, pp. 32–63.

The distinguishing feature of Hebrew poetry is now generally acknowledged to be the parallelism of members. This would be a very natural form for such short and vivid sentences as characterize Hebrew syntax. Let the soul be filled with deep emotion; let burning passions move the heart, and sparkle in the eye, and speak loudly in the voice, and the simple sentences of Hebrew prose would spontaneously take poetic form. In illustration of this we may instance the exciting controversy of Jacob and Laban in Gen. xxxi. The whole chapter is like a passage from an ancient epic; but when we read the speeches of Laban and Jacob we seem to feel the wild throbbings of their human passions. The speeches are not cast in the artificial harmony of parallelism which appears in the poetical books; but we shall best observe their force by presenting them in the following form. After seven days' hot pursuit, Laban overtakes Jacob in Mount Gilead, and assails him thus:

Parallelism the distinguishing feature.

What hast thou done?
And thou hast stolen my heart,
And hast carried off my daughters
As captives of the sword.
Why didst thou hide thyself to flee?
And thou hast stolen me,
And thou didst not inform me,
And I would have sent thee away with joy,
And with songs, with timbrel and with harp.
And thou didst not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters!
Now hast thou played the fool—to do!
It is to the God of my hand
To do with you an evil.
But the God of your father
Yesternight said to me, saying:
Guard thyself from speaking with Jacob from good to evil.
And now, going thou hast gone;
For longing thou hast longed for the house of thy father.
Why hast thou stolen my gods? Verses 26–30.

After the goods have been searched, and no gods found, "Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban," and uttered his pent-up emotion in the following style:

What my trespass,
What my sin,
That thou hast been burning after me?
For thou hast been feeling all my vessels;
What hast thou found of all the vessels of thy house?

Place here —
Before my brethren and thy brethren,
And let them decide between us two.
This twenty year I with thee;
Thy ewes and thy goats have not been bereft,
And the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.
The torn I brought not to thee;
I atoned for it.
Of my hand didst thou demand it,
Stolen by day,
Or stolen by night.
I have been —
In the day heat devoured me,
And cold in the night,
And my sleep fled from my eyes.
This to me twenty year in thy house.
I served thee fourteen year for two of thy daughters,
And six years for thy flock;
And thou hast changed my wages ten parts.
Unless the God of my father,
The God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac, were for me,—
That now empty thou hadst sent me away.
The affliction and the labour of my hands
God has seen,
And he was judging yesternight. Verses 36–42.

This may not be poetry, in the strict sense; but it is certainly not the language of common prose. The rapidity of movement, the emotion, the broken lines, and the abrupt transitions, serve to show how a language of such peculiar structure as the Hebrew might early and naturally develop a poetic form, whose distinguishing feature would be a harmony of successive sentences, or some artificial concord or contrast of different sentiments, rather than syllabic versification. Untrammeled by metric limitations, the Hebrew poet enjoyed a peculiar freedom, and could utter the moving sentiments of passion in a great variety of forms.

Form essential to poetry.

We cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that some structural form is essential to all poetry. The elements of poetry are invention, inspiration, and expressive form. But all possible genius for invention, and all the inspiration of most fervent passion, would go for nothing without some suitable mould in which to set them forth. When the creations of genius and inspiration have taken a monumental form in language, that form becomes an essential part of the whole. Hence the impossibility of translating the poetry of Homer, or Virgil, or David, into Eng-

lish prose, or the prose of any other language, and at the same time preserving the power and spirit of the original.

Bayard Taylor's translation of Goethe's Faust is a masterpiece in this, that it is a remarkably successful attempt to transfer from one language to another not merely the thoughts, the sentiment, and the exact meaning of the author, but also the form and rhythm. Mr. Taylor argues very forcibly, and we think truly, that "the value of form in a poetical work is the first question to be considered. Poetry," he observes, "is not simply a fashion of expression; it is the form of expression absolutely required by a certain class of ideas. Poetry, indeed, may be distinguished from prose by the single circumstance that it is the utterance of whatever in man cannot be perfectly uttered in any other than a rhythmical form. It is useless to say that the naked meaning is independent of the form. On the contrary, the form contributes essentially to the fulness of the meaning. In poetry which endures through its own inherent vitality, there is no forced union of these two elements. They are as intimately blended, and with the same mysterious beauty, as the sexes in the ancient Hermaphroditus. To attempt to represent poetry in prose is very much like attempting to translate music into speech."[1]

Bayard Taylor on form in poetry.

How impossible to translate perfectly into any other form the following passage from Milton:

> Now storming fury rose,
> And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now
> Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed
> Horrible discord, and the maddening wheels
> Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
> Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss
> Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
> And flying vaulted either host with fire.
> So under fiery cope together rushed
> Both battles main, with ruinous assault
> And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven
> Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
> Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when
> Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
> On either side, the least of whom could wield
> These elements, and arm him with the force
> Of all their regions.[2]

The very form of this passage, as it stands before the reader's eye, contributes not a little to the emotions produced by it in the

[1] Preface to Translation of Goethe's Faust.

[2] Paradise Lost, Book vi, lines 207–223.

soul of a man of taste. Change the order of the words, or attempt to state their naked meaning in prose, and the very ideas will seem to vanish. The grandeur and beauty of the passage are due as much to the rhythm, the emphatic collocation of words, the expressiveness of the form in which the whole is placed before us, as to the sublime conceptions they embody. But if so much is due to the form of poetic writing, much must be lost from any noble poem when transferred to another language shorn of these elements of power. The least we can do is to make prominent in our translations the measured forms of the original. So far as it may be done without too great violence to the idioms of our own tongue, we should preserve the same order of words, emphatic forms of statement, and abrupt transitions. In these respects Hebrew poetry is probably more capable of exact translation than that of any other language. For there is no rhyme, no metric scale, to be translated. Two things it is essential to preserve—the spirit and the form, and both of these are of such a nature as to make it possible to reproduce them to a great extent in almost any other language.[1]

Hebrew spirit and form may be largely preserved in translation.

[1] No man, perhaps, has shown a greater power to present in English the real spirit of Hebrew poetry than Tayler Lewis. The following version of Job iv, 12–21, while not exactly following the Hebrew collocation of the words, and giving to some words a meaning scarcely sustained by Hebrew usage, does, nevertheless, bring out the spirit and force of the original in a most impressive way:

To me, at times, there steals a warning word;
Mine ear its whisper seems to catch.
In troubled thoughts from spectres of the night,
When falls on men the vision-seeing trance,—
And fear has come, and trembling dread,
And made my every bone to thrill with awe,—
'Tis then before me stirs a breathing form;
O'er all my flesh it makes the hair rise up.
It stands; no face distinct can I discern;
An outline is before mine eyes;
Deep silence! then a voice I hear:
Is mortal man more just than God?
Is boasting man more pure than he who made him?
In his own servants, lo, he trusteth not,
Even on his angels doth he charge defect.
Much more to them who dwell in homes of clay,
With their foundation laid in dust,
And crumbled like the moth
From morn till night they're stricken down;
Without regard they perish utterly.
Their cord of life, is it not torn away?
They die—still lacking wisdom.

See the notes on this rhythmical version, in which Lewis defends the accuracy of his translation, in Lange's Commentary on Job, pp. 59, 60. See also Lewis' articles on The Emotional Element in Hebrew Translation, in the Methodist Quarterly Review, for Jan., 1862, Jan. and July, 1863, and Jan., 1864.

While the spirit and emotionality of Hebrew poetry are due to a combination of various elements, the parallelism of sentences is a most marked feature of its outward form. This it becomes us now to exhibit more fully, for a scientific interpretation of the poetical portions of the Old Testament requires that the parallelism be not ignored. Joseph Addison Alexander, indeed, animadverts upon Bishop Lowth's "supposed discovery of rhythm or measure in the Hebrew prophets," and condemns his theory as unsound and in bad taste.[1] But his strictures seem to proceed on the assumption that the theory of parallelism involves the idea of metrical versification analogous to the prosody of other languages. Aside from such an assumption they have no relevancy or force. For it is indisputable that the large portions of the Hebrew scriptures, commonly regarded as poetical, are as capable of arrangement in well-defined parallelisms as the variety of Greek metres are capable of being reduced to system and rules.

Structural form of Hebrew parallelism.

The short and vivid sentences which are a peculiar characteristic of Hebrew speech would lead, by a very natural process, to the formation of parallelisms in poetry. The desire to present a subject most impressibly would lead to repetition, and the tautology would show itself in slightly varying forms of one and the same thought. Thus the following, from Prov. i, 24–27:

The process of forming parallelisms natural in Hebrew.

> Because I have called, and ye refuse;
> I have stretched out my hand, and no one attending;
> And ye refuse all my counsel,
> And my correction ye have not desired;
> Also I in your calamity will laugh;
> I will mock at the coming of your terror;
> At the coming—as a roaring tempest—of your terror;
> And your calamity as a sweeping whirlwind shall come on;
> At the coming upon you of distress and anguish.

Other thoughts would be more forcibly expressed by setting them in contrast with something of an opposite nature. Hence such parallelisms as the following:

> They have kneeled down and fallen;
> But we have arisen and straightened ourselves up. Psa. xx, 9.
>
> The memory of the righteous (is) for a blessing,
> But the name of the wicked shall be rotten.
> The wise of heart will take commands,
> But a prating fool shall be thrown down. Prov. x, 7, 8.

[1] See the Introduction to his Commentary on The Earlier Prophecies of Isaiah, pp. 48, 49. New York, 1846.

Such simple distichs would readily develop into more complex examples of parallelism, and we find among the Hebrew poems a great variety of forms in which the sacred writers sought to set forth their burning thoughts. The more common and regular forms of Hebrew parallelism are classified by Lowth under three general heads, which he denominates Synonymous, Antithetic, and Synthetic. These, again, may be subdivided, according as the lines form simple couplets or triplets, or have measured correspondence in sentiment and length, or are unequal, and broken by sudden bursts of passion, or by some impressive refrain.

1. Synonymous Parallelism.

Here we place passages in which the different lines or members present the same thought in a slightly altered manner of expression. To this class belong the couplets of Prov. i, 24–27 cited above, where it will be seen there is a constant repetition of thought under a variety of words. Three kinds of synonymous parallels may be specified:

a) **Identical,** when the different members are composed of the same, or nearly the same, words:

> Thou wert snared in the sayings of thy mouth;
> Thou wert taken in the sayings of thy mouth. Prov. vi, 2.
>
> They lifted up, the floods, O Jehovah;
> They lifted up, the floods, their voice;
> They lift up, the floods, their dashing. Psa. xciii, 3.
>
> It shall devour the parts of his skin,
> It shall devour his parts, the first-born of death. Job xviii, 13.
>
> For in a night is spoiled Ar, Moab, cut off.
> For in a night is spoiled Kir, Moab, cut off. Isa. xv, 1

b) **Similar,** when the sentiment is substantially the same, but language and figures are different:

> For he on seas has founded it,
> And on floods will he establish it. Psa. xxiv, 2.
>
> Brays the wild ass over the tender grass?
> Or lows the ox over his provender? Job vi, 5.

c) **Inverted,** when there is an inversion or transposition of words or sentences so as to change the order of thought:

> The heavens are telling the glory of God,
> And the work of his hands declares the expanse. Psa. xix, 2.
>
> They did not keep the covenant of God,
> And in his law they refused to walk. Psa. lxxviii, 10.

For unto me is he lovingly joined, and I will deliver him;
I will exalt him, for he has known my name. Psa. xci, 14.

Strengthen ye the weak hands,
And the feeble knees confirm. Isa. xxxv, 3.

2. Antithetic Parallelism.

Under this head come all passages in which there is a contrast or opposition of thought presented in the different sentences. This kind of parallelism abounds in the Book of Proverbs especially, for it is peculiarly adapted to express maxims of proverbial wisdom. There are two forms of antithetic parallelism:

a) **Simple,** when the contrast is presented in a single distich of simple sentences:

Righteousness will exalt a nation,
But the disgrace of peoples is sin. Prov. xiv, 34.

The tongue of wise men makes knowledge good,
But the mouth of fools pours out folly. Prov. xv, 2.

For a moment in his anger:
Lifetimes in his favour.
In the evening abideth weeping;
And at morning, a shout of joy. Psa. xxx, 5. (6.)

b) **Compound,** when there are two or more sentences in each member of the antithesis:

The ox has known his owner,
And the ass the crib of his lord;
Israel has not known,—
My people have not shown themselves discerning. Isa. i, 3.

If ye be willing, and have heard,
The good of the land shall ye eat;
But if ye refuse, and have rebelled,
A sword shall eat—
For the mouth of Jehovah has spoken. Isa. i, 19, 20.

In a little moment I forsook thee,
But in great mercies I will gather thee.
In the raging of wrath I hid my face a moment from thee;
But with everlasting kindness have I had mercy on thee.
Isa. liv, 7, 8.

3. Synthetic Parallelism.

Synthetic or Constructive Parallelism consists, according to Lowth's definition, "only in the similar form of construction, in which word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite; but there is a correspondence and equality

between different propositions in respect to the shape and turn of the whole sentence and of the constructive parts; such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative."[1] Two kinds of synthetic parallels may be noticed:

a) **Correspondent,** when there is a designed and formal correspondency between related sentences, as in the following example from Psa. xxvii, 1, where the first line corresponds with the third, and the second with the fourth:

Jehovah, my light and my salvation,
Of whom shall I be afraid?
Jehovah, fortress of my life,
Of whom shall I stand in terror?

This same style of correspondence is noticeable in the following compound antithetic parallelism:

They shall be ashamed and blush together,
Who are rejoicing in my harm;
They shall be clothed with shame and disgrace,
Who magnify themselves over me.
They shall shout and rejoice,
Who delight in my righteousness,
And they shall say continually—be magnified, Jehovah,
Who delight in the peace of his servant. Psa. xxxv, 26, 27.

b) **Cumulative,** when there is a climax of sentiment running through the successive parallels, or when there is a constant variation of words and thought by means of the simple accumulation of images or ideas:

Happy the man who has not walked in the counsel of wicked ones,
And in the way of sinners has not stood,
And in the seat of scorners has not sat down;
But in the law of Jehovah is his delight;
And in his law will he meditate day and night. Psa. i, 1, 2.

Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found,
Call upon him while he is near by;
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the man of iniquity his thoughts;
And let him return to Jehovah, and he will have mercy on him,
And to our God, for he will be abundant to pardon. Isa. lv, 6, 7.

For the fig-tree shall not blossom,
And no produce in the vines;
Deceived has the work of the olive,
And fields have not wrought food;

[1] Lowth's Isaiah, Preliminary Dissertation, p. 21. London, 1779.

Cut off from the fold was the flock,
And no cattle in the stalls;
But I—in Jehovah will I exult;
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. Hab. iii, 17.

But aside from these more regular forms of parallelism, there are numerous peculiarities in Hebrew poetry which are not to be classified under any rules or theories of prosody. The rapt flights of the ancient bards ignored such trammels, and, by abrupt turns of thought, broken and unequal lines, and sudden ejaculations of prayer or emotion, they produced a great variety of expressive forms of sentiment. Take, for illustration, the two following extracts from Jacob's dying psalm—the blessings of Judah and Joseph—and note the variety of expression, the sharp transitions, the profound emotion, and the boldness and abundance of metaphor:

Irregular structure of impassioned poetical utterances.

Judah, thou! Thy brothers shall praise thee;
Thy hand in the neck of thy foes!
They shall bow down to thee, the sons of thy father.
Whelp of a lion is Judah.
From the prey, O my son, thou hast gone up!
He bent low;
He lay down as a lion,
And as a lioness;
Who will rouse him up?
There shall not depart a sceptre from Judah,
And a ruler from between his feet,
Until he shall come—Shiloh—
And to him shall be gathered peoples.
Fastening to the vine his foal,
And to the choice vine the son of his ass,
He has washed in the wine his garment,
And in the blood of grapes his clothes.
Dark the eyes from wine,
And white the teeth from milk. Gen. xlix, 8–12.

Son of a fruit tree is Joseph,
Son of a fruit tree over a fountain;
Daughters climbing over a wall.
And they imbittered him,
And they shot,
And they hated him,—
The lords of arrows.
Yet remained in strength his bow,
And firm were the arms of his hands,
From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob;
From the name of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel:

From the God of thy father, and he will help thee;
And the Almighty, and he will bless thee;
Blessings of the heavens above,
Blessings of the deep lying down below,
Blessings of breasts and womb.
The blessings of thy father have been mighty,
Above the blessings of the enduring mountains,
The desire of the everlasting hills.
Let them be to the head of Joseph
And to the crown of the devoted of his brothers. Gen. xlix, 22–26.

Alphabetical poems.

In the later period of the language we find a number of artificial poems, in which the several lines or verses begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in their regular order. Thus, in Psalms cxi and cxii, the lines or half verses are arranged alphabetically. In Psalms xxv, xxxiv, cxlv, Prov. xxxi, 10–31, and Lam. i and ii, each separate verse begins with a new letter in regular order. In Psa. xxxvii, with some slight exceptions, every alternate verse begins with a new letter. In Psa. cxix and Lam. iii, a series of verses, each beginning with the same letter, is grouped into strophes or stanzas, and the strophes follow one another in alphabetical order. Such artificiality evinces a later period in the life of the language, when the poetical spirit, becoming less creative and more mechanical, contrives a new feature of external form to arrest attention and assist the memory.

Hebrew rhymes.

We find also in the Old Testament several noticeable instances of rhyme. The following, in Samson's answer to the men of Timnath (Judges xiv, 18), was probably designed

לוּלֵא חֲרַשְׁתֶּם בְּעֶגְלָתִי
לֹא מְצָאתֶם חִידָתִי

If ye had not plowed with my heifer,
Ye had not found out my riddle.

The following are perhaps only accidental:

מַלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאִיִּים מִנְחָה יָשִׁיבוּ
מַלְכֵי שְׁבָא וּסְבָא אֶשְׁכָּר יַקְרִיבוּ

Kings of Tarshish and of isles a gift shall return,
Kings of Sheba and Seba a present shall bring. Psa. lxxii, 10.

כִּסְדֹם הָיִינוּ
לַעֲמֹרָה דָמִינוּ

As Sodom had we been,
To Gomorrah had we been like. Isa. i, 9.

בְּגוֹי חָנֵף אֲשַׁלְּחֶנּוּ
וְעַל־עַם עֶבְרָתִי אֲצַוֶּנּוּ

In a nation profane will I send him,
And upon a people of my wrath will I command him. Isa. x, 6.[1]

But aside from all artificial forms, the Hebrew language, in its words, idiomatic phrases, vivid concepts, and pictorial power, has a remarkable simplicity and beauty. To the emotional Hebrew every thing was full of life, and the manner of the most ordinary action attracted his attention. Sentences full of pathos, sublime exclamations, and profound suggestions often found expression in his common talk. How often the word *behold* (הִנֵּה) occurs in simple narrative! How the very process and order of action are pictured in the following passages: "Jacob lifted up his feet, and went to the land of the sons of the east" (Gen. xxix, 1). "He lifted up his voice, and wept. . . . Laban heard the hearing about Jacob, the son of his brother, and he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house" (verses 11, 13). "Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold! Esau was coming" (Gen. xxxiii, 1).

Vividness of Hebrew words and phrases.

There are, again, many passages where a notable ellipsis enhances the impression: "And now, lest he send forth his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever—and sent him forth Jehovah God from the garden of Eden" (Gen. iii, 22). "And now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, wipe me, I pray, from thy book which thou hast written." "Return, O Jehovah—how long!" (Psa. xc, 13). The attempt of our translators to supply the ellipsis in Psa. xix, 3, 4, perverts the real meaning: "*There is* no speech nor language *where* their voice is not heard." The simple Hebrew is much more impressive:

Ellipsis.

No saying, and no words;—
Not heard—their voice;
In all the earth went forth their line,
And in the end of the world their utterances.

That is, the heavens have no audible language or voice such as mortal man is wont to speak; nevertheless, they have been stretched as a measuring line over all the surface of the earth, and, though voiceless, they have sermons for thoughtful souls in every part of the habitable world.

[1] Comp. also Isa. i, 25, where three rhymes appear in one verse; and Isa. i, 29; xliv, 3; xlix, 10; liii, 6; Job vi, 9: Psa. xlv, 8; Prov. vi, 1.

Special Hermeneutics must recognise rhetorical form.

It is the province of Special Hermeneutics to recognize rhetorical form, and to distinguish the essential thought from the peculiar mode of expression in which it may be set forth. And it must be obvious to every thoughtful mind that the impassioned poetry of the Hebrews is not of a nature to be subjected to a literal interpretation. Many of the finest passages of the Psalms and the Prophets have been wrought out in splendid style for the sake of rhetorical effect, and their magnificent parallelisms and strophes should be explained as we explain similar imaginative flights of other poets. Such highly wrought language may serve better than any other to deepen the impression of the divine thought which it conveys. It is not literal exposition but connate spiritual rapture that enables one to understand the force of such a passage as Deut. xxxii, 22:

> For now a fire is kindled in my rage,
> And it has burned to Sheol far below,
> And it has eaten earth and her increase,
> And made the bases of the mountains burn.

The emotional language of Zech. xi, 1, 2 loses nothing in power or impressiveness by addressing mountains and trees as if they were beings of conscious life and feeling:

> Open, O Lebanon, thy doors, and fire shall eat into thy cedars!
> Howl, O Cypress, for the cedar has fallen which mighty ones did spoil!
> Howl, oaks of Bashan, for down has gone the inaccessible forest!

In the coming calamity which this oracle announced, it is not necessary to suppose that a single cedar on Mount Lebanon or an oak of Bashan was destroyed. The language is that of poetic imagery, adapted to produce a profound impression, and to convey the idea of a widespread ruin, but never designed to be literally understood. And so those sublime descriptions of Jehovah found in the Psalms and Prophets—his bowing down the heavens and descending, with a dark cloud under his feet; his riding upon the cherubim and making himself visible on the wings of the wind (2 Sam. xxii, 10, 11; comp. Psa. xviii, 9, 10; Ezek. i, 13, 14), his standing and measuring the earth, riding on horses and chariots of salvation, with horns issuing out of his hand, and the lightning-glitter of his spear astonishing the sun and moon in the heavens (Hab. iii, 4, 6, 8, 11)—these and all like passages are but poetical pictures of the power and majesty of God in his providential administration of the world. The particular figures of speech employed in such descriptions will be discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

THOSE portions of the Holy Scriptures which are written in figurative language call for special care in their interpretation. When a word is employed in another than its primary meaning, or applied to some object different from that to which it is appropriated in common usage, it is called a trope.[1] The necessities and purposes of human speech require the frequent use of words in such a tropical sense. We have already seen, under the head of the *usus loquendi* of words, how many terms come to have a variety of meanings. Some words lose their primary signification altogether, and are employed only in a secondary or acquired sense. Most words in every language have been used or are capable of being used in this way. And very many words have so long and so constantly maintained a figurative sense that their primary meaning has become obsolete and forgotten. How few remember that the word *law* denotes *that which is laid;* or that the common expressions *right* and *wrong*, which have almost exclusively a moral import, originally signified straight and crooked. Other words are so commonly used in a twofold sense that we immediately note when they are employed literally and when figuratively. When James, Cephas, and John are called *pillars* of the Church (Gal. ii, 9), we see at once that the word *pillars* is a metaphor. And when the Church itself is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. ii, 20), we know that a figure, the image of a house or temple, is meant to be depicted before the mind.

Tropes many and various.

The origin of figures of speech has been generally attributed to the poverty of languages in their earliest stages. The scarcity of words required the use of one and the same word in a variety of meanings. "No language," says Blair, "is so copious as to have a separate word for every separate idea. Men naturally sought to abridge this labour of multiplying words *ad infinitum;* and, in order to lay less burden on their memories, made one word, which they had already appropriated to a certain idea or object, stand also for some other idea or object

Origin and necessity of figurative language.

[1] From the Greek τροπός, a *turn* or change of language; that is, a word turned from its primary usage to another meaning.

between which and the primary one they found or fancied some relation."[1]

But it is not solely in the scarcity of words that we are to find the origin of figurative language. The natural operations of the human mind prompt men to trace analogies and make comparisons. Pleasing emotions are excited and the imagination is gratified by the use of metaphors and similes. Were we to suppose a language sufficiently copious in words to express all possible conceptions, the human mind would still require us to compare and contrast our concepts, and such a procedure would soon necessitate a variety of figures of speech. So much of our knowledge is acquired through the senses, that all our abstract ideas and our spiritual language have a material basis. It is remarkable to what an extent the language of common life is made up of metaphors, the origin of which has become largely if not altogether forgotten.

Source of scriptural imagery.

The principal sources of the figurative language of the Bible are the physical features of the Holy Land, the habits and customs of its ancient tribes, and the forms of Israelitish worship. All these sources should, accordingly, be closely studied in order to the interpretation of the figurative portions of the Scriptures. As we discern a divine providence in the use of Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek as the languages of God's inspired revelation, and as we believe that the progeny of Abraham through Jacob were the divinely chosen people to receive and guard the oracles of God, so may we also believe that the Land of Promise was an essential element in the process of developing and perfecting the rhetorical form of the sacred records. "It is neither fiction nor extravagance," says Thomson, "to call this land a microcosm—a little world in itself, embracing everything which in the thought of the Creator would be needed in developing the language of the kingdom of heaven. Nor is it easy to see how the end sought could have been reached at all without just such a land, furnished and fitted up, as this was, by the overruling providence of God. All were needed—mountain and valley, hill and plain, lake and river, sea and sky, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, trees, shrubs, and flowers, beasts and birds, men and women, tribes and nations, governments and religions false and true, and other things innumerable; none of which could be spared. Think, if you can, of a Bible with all these left out, or others essentially different substituted in their place—a Bible without patriarch or pilgrimage, with no bondage in Egypt, or deliverance therefrom, no Red Sea, no Sinai with its miracles, no wilderness of wandering with all the

[1] Rhetoric, Lecture xiv, On the Origin and Nature of Figurative Language.

included scenes and associated incidents; without a Jordan with a Canaan over against it, or a Dead Sea with Sodom beneath it; no Moriah with its temple, no Zion with palaces, nor Hinnom below, with the fire and the worm that never die. Whence could have come our divine songs and psalms, if the sacred poets had lived in a land without mountain or valley, where were no plains covered over with corn, no fields clothed with green, no hills planted with the olive, the fig, and the vine? All are needed, and all do good service, from the oaks of Bashan and the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall. The tiny mustard-seed has its moral, and lilies their lessons. Thorns and thistles utter admonitions, and revive sad memories. The sheep and the fold, the shepherd and his dog, the ass and his owner, the ox and his goad, the camel and his burden, the horse with neck clothed with thunder; lions that roar, wolves that raven, foxes that destroy, harts panting for water brooks, and roes feeding among lilies, doves in their windows, sparrows on the housetop, storks in the heavens, eagles hasting to their prey; things great and small; the busy bee improving each shining hour, and the careful ant laying up store in harvest—nothing too large to serve, too small to aid. These are merely random specimens out of a world of rich materials; but we must not forget that they are all found in this land where the dialect of God's spiritual kingdom was to be taught and spoken."[1]

Specific rules unnecessary and impracticable.

It is scarcely necessary, and, indeed, quite impracticable, to lay down specific rules for determining when language is used figuratively and when literally. It is an old and oft-repeated hermeneutical principle that words should be understood in their literal sense unless such literal interpretation involves a manifest contradiction or absurdity. It should be observed, however, that this principle, when reduced to practice, becomes simply an appeal to every man's rational judgment. And what to one seems very absurd and improbable may be to another altogether simple and self-consistent. Some expositors have claimed to see necessity for departing from the literal sense where others saw none, and it seems impossible to establish any fixed rule that will govern in all cases. Reference must be had to the general character and style of the particular book, to the plan and purpose of the author, and to the context and scope of the particular passage in question. Especially should strict regard be had to the usage

[1] The Physical Basis of our Spiritual Language; by W. M. Thomson, in the Bibliotheca Sacra for January, 1872. Compare the same author's articles on The Natural Basis of our Spiritual Language in the same periodical for Jan., 1873; Jan., 1874; Jan., 1875; July, 1876; and Jan., 1877.

of the sacred writers, as determined by a thorough collation and comparison of all parallel passages. The same general principles, by which we ascertain the grammatico-historical sense, apply also to the interpretation of figurative language, and it should never be forgotten that the figurative portions of the Bible are as certain and truthful as the most prosaic chapters. Metaphors, allegories, parables, and symbols are divinely chosen forms of setting forth the oracles of God, and we must not suppose their meaning to be so vague and uncertain as to be past finding out. In the main, we believe the figurative parts of the Scriptures are not so difficult to understand as many have imagined. By a careful and judicious discrimination the interpreter should aim to determine the character and purport of each particular trope, and explain it in harmony with the common laws of language, and the author's context, scope, and plan.

Figures of words and figures of thought.

Figures of speech have been distributed into two great classes, figures of words and figures of thought. The distinction is an easy one in that a figure of words is one in which the image or resemblance is confined to a single word, whereas a figure of thought may require for its expression a great many words and sentences. Metaphor and metonomy are figures of words, in which the comparison is reduced to a single expression, as when, characterizing Herod, Jesus said, "Go and say to that *fox*" (Luke xiii, 32). In Psalm xviii, 2, we find seven figures of words crowded into a single verse: "Jehovah, my rock (סֶלַע), and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my rock (צוּר)—I will seek refuge in him;—my shield and horn of my salvation, my height." Figures of thought, on the other hand, are seen in similes, allegories, and parables, where no single word will suffice to convey the idea intended, but an entire passage or section must be taken together. But this classification of figures will be of little value in the study of the figurative language of the Scriptures.

Metonymy of cause and effect.

All figures of speech are founded upon some resemblance or relation which different objects bear to one another, and it often happens, in rapid and brilliant style, that a cause is put for its effect, or an effect for its cause; or the name of a subject is used when only some adjunct or associated circumstance is intended. This figure of speech is called Metonymy, from the Greek *μετά*, denoting *change*, and *ὄνομα*, a *name*. Such change and substitution of one name for another give language a force and impressiveness not otherwise attainable. Thus, Job is represented as saying, "My *arrow* is incurable" (Job xxxiv, 6); where by *arrow* is evidently meant a wound caused by an arrow, and allusion is

made to chapter vi, 4, where the bitter afflictions of Job are represented as caused by the arrows of the Almighty. So again in Luke xvi, 29 and xxiv, 27, *Moses* and *the prophets* are used for the writings of which they were the authors. The name of a patriarch is sometimes used when his posterity is intended (Gen. ix, 27, Amos vii, 9). In Gen. xlv, 21; Num. iii, 16; Deut. xvii, 6, the word *mouth* is used for *saying* or *commandment* which issues from one's mouth. "According to the *mouth* (order or command) of Pharaoh." "According to the *mouth* (word) of Jehovah." "At the *mouth* (word, testimony) of two witnesses or three witnesses shall the dying one (הַמֵּת, the one appointed to die, or worthy of death,) be put to death." The words *lip* and *tongue* are used in a similar way in Prov. xii, 19, and frequently. "The *lip* of truth shall be established forever; but only for a moment [Heb. until I shall wink] the *tongue* of falsehood." Comp. Prov. xvii, 7; xxv, 15. In Ezekiel xxiii, 29, "They shall take away all thy labour, and leave thee naked," the word *labour* is used instead of earnings or results of labour. All such cases of metonymy—and examples might be multiplied indefinitely—are commonly classified under the head of Metonymy of cause and effect. To this same class belong also such passages as Exod. vii, 19, where, instead of vessels, the names of the materials of which they were made are used: "Stretch out thy hand over the waters of Egypt . . . and there shall be blood in all the land of Egypt, both in wood and in stone;" that is, in wooden vessels and stone reservoirs.

Another use of this figure occurs where some adjunct, associated idea, or circumstance is put for the main subject, and *vice versa*. Thus, in Lev. xix, 32, שֵׂיבָה, *gray hair, hoariness*, is used for a person of advanced age: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head." Comp. Gen. xlii, 38: "Ye will bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to the grave." When Moses commands the elders of Israel to take a lamb according to their families and "kill the passover" (Exod. xii, 21), he evidently uses the word *passover* for the paschal lamb. In Hosea i, 2, it is written: "The land has grievously committed whoredom." Here the word *land* is used by metonymy for the Israelitish people dwelling in the land. So also, in Matt. iii, 5, Jerusalem and Judea are put for the people that inhabited those places: "Then went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region round about the Jordan." The metonymy of the subject for its adjunct is also seen in passages where the container is put for the thing contained, as, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies" (Psa. xxiii, 5). "Blessed shall be thy basket, and thy kneading trough"

Metonymy of subject and adjunct.

(Deut. xxviii, 5). "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of demons" (1 Cor. x, 21). Here *table*, *basket*, *kneading-trough*, and *cup* are used for that which they contained, or for which they were used. The following examples illustrate how the abstract is used for the concrete: "He shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith" (Rom. iii, 30). Here the word *circumcision* designates the Jews, and *uncircumcision* the Gentiles. In Rom. xi, 7, the word *election* is used for the aggregate of those who composed the "remnant according to the election of grace" (verse 5), the elect portion of Israel. And Paul tells the Ephesians (v, 8) with great force of language: "Ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord."

Metonymy of sign and thing signified.

There is another use of this figure which may be called metonymy of the sign and the thing signified. Thus Isa. xxii, 22: "I will put the key of the house of David upon his shoulder, and he shall open, and no one shutting, and he shall shut, and no one opening." Here *key* is used as the sign of control over the house, of power to open or close the doors whenever one pleases; and the putting the key *upon the shoulder* denotes that the power, symbolized by the key, will be a heavy burden on him who exercises it. Compare Matt. xvi, 19. So again *diadem* and *crown* are used in Ezek. xxi, 26, for regal dignity and power, and *sceptre* in Gen. xlix, 10, and Zech, x, 11, for kingly dominion. In Isaiah's glowing picture of the Messianic era (ii, 4) he describes the utter cessation of national strife and warfare by the significant words, "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks." In Ezek. vii, 27, we have an example of the use of the thing signified for the sign: "The prince shall be clothed with desolation;" that is, arrayed in the garments or signs of desolation.

Synecdoche.

Another kind of trope, quite similar in character to metonymy, is that by which the whole is put for a part, or a part for the whole; a genus for a species, or a species for a genus; the singular for the plural, and the plural for the singular. This is called Synecdoche, from the Greek *συν*, *with*, and *ἐκδέχομαι*, to *receive from*, which conveys the general idea of receiving and associating one thing along with another. Thus "all the world" is used in Luke ii, 1, for the Roman Empire; and in Matt. xii, 40, three days and three nights are used for only part of that time. The soul is often named when the whole man or person is intended; as, "We were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls (Acts xxvii, 37). The singular of *day* is used by synecdoche for days or

period in such passages as Eccles. xii, 3: "In the day when the keepers of the house tremble." The singular of *stork, turtle, crane,* and *swallow* is used in Jer. viii, 7, as the representative of the whole class to which each belongs. Jephthah is said to have been "buried in the cities of Gilead" (Judg. xii, 7), where, of course, only one of those cities is intended. In Psa. xlvi, 9, the Lord is represented as "causing wars to cease unto the extremity of the land; bow he will shiver, and cut in pieces spear; war chariots he will burn in the fire." Here, by specifying *bow, spear,* and *chariots,* the Psalmist doubtless designed to represent Jehovah's triumph as an utter destruction of all implements of war. In Deut. xxxii, 41, the flashing gleam of the sword is put for its edge: "If I sharpen the lightning of my sword, and my hand lay hold on judgment."

Personification.

It was characteristic of the Hebrew mind to form and express vivid conceptions of the external world. All objects of nature, inanimate things, and even abstract ideas were viewed as if instinct with life, and spoken of as masculine or feminine. And this tendency is noticeable in all languages, and occasions the figure of speech called Personification.[1] It is so common a feature of language that it often occurs in the most ordinary conversation; but it is more especially suited to the language of imagination and passion, and appears most frequently in the poetical parts of Scripture. The statement in Num. xvi, 32, that "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed" Korah and his associates, is an instance of personification, the like of which often occurs in prose narration. More striking is the language of Matt. vi, 34: "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow, for the morrow will be anxious for itself." Here the morrow itself is pictured before us as a living person, pressed by care and anxiety. But the more forcible instances of personification are found in such passages as Psa. cxiv, 3, 4: "The sea saw and fled; the Jordan was turned backward. The mountains leaped like rams; hills like the sons of the flock." Or, again, in Hab. iii, 10: "Mountains saw thee, they writhe; a flood of waters passed over; the deep gave his voice; on high his hands he lifted." Here mountains, hills, rivers, and sea, are introduced as things of life. They are assumed to be self-conscious, having powers of thought, feeling, and locomotion, and yet it is all the emotional language of imagination and poetic fervour, and has its origin in an intense, lively intuition of nature.

[1] The more technical name is *Prosopopœia,* from the Greek *πρόσωπον, face,* or *person,* and *ποιέω,* to *make*; and, accordingly, means to give personal form or character to an object. *Prosopopœia* is held by some to be a term of more extensive application than personification.

Apostrophe.

Apostrophe is a figure closely allied to personification. The name is derived from the Greek ἀπό, *from*, and στρέφω, *to turn*, and denotes especially the turning of a speaker away from his immediate hearers, and addressing an absent and imaginary person or thing. When the address is to an inanimate object, the figures of personification and apostrophe combine in one and the same passage. So, in connexion with the passage above cited from Psa. cxiv. After personifying the sea, the Jordan, and the mountains, the psalmist suddenly turns in direct address to them, and says: "What is the matter with thee, O thou sea, that thou fleest? Thou Jordan, that thou art turning backward? Ye mountains, that ye leap like rams; ye hills, like the sons of the flock?" The following apostrophe is peculiarly impressive by the force of its imagery. "O, Sword of Jehovah! How long wilt thou not be quiet? Gather thyself to thy sheath; be at rest and be dumb" (Jer. xlvii, 6). But apostrophe proper is an address to some absent person either living or dead; as when David laments for the dead Absalom (2 Sam. xviii, 33), and, as if the departed soul were present to hear, exclaims: "My son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died in thy stead, O Absalom, my son, my son!" The apostrophe to the fallen king of Babylon, in Isa. xiv, 9–20, is one of the boldest and sublimest examples of the kind in any language. Similar instances of bold and impassioned address abound in the Hebrew prophets, and, as we have seen, the oriental mind was notably given to express thoughts and feelings in this emotional style.

Interrogation.

Interrogatory forms of expression are often the strongest possible way of enunciating important truths. As when it is written in Heb. i, 14, concerning the angels: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth into service for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" Here the doctrine of the ministry of angels in such a noble service is by implication assumed as an undisputed belief. The interrogatories in Rom. viii, 33–35, afford a most impressive style of setting forth the triumph of believers in the blessed provisions of redemption: "Who shall bring charge against God's elect ones? Shall God who justifies? Who is he that is condemning? Is it Christ Jesus that died, but, rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written For thy sake we are killed all the day; we were accounted as sheep of slaughter. But in all these things we more than conquer through

him that loved us."[1] Very frequent and conspicuous also are the interrogatory forms of speech in the Book of Job. "Knowest thou this of old, from the placing of Adam on the earth, that the triumph of the wicked is short, and the joy of the profane for a moment?" (xx, 4). "The secret of Eloah canst thou find? Or canst thou find out Shaddai to perfection?" (xi, 7). Jehovah's answer out of the whirlwind (chaps. xxxviii–xli) is very largely in this form.

Hyperbole.

Hyperbole is a rhetorical figure which consists in exaggeration, or magnifying an object beyond reality. It has its natural origin in the tendency of youthful and imaginative minds to portray facts in the liveliest colours. An ardent imagination would very naturally describe the appearance of the many camps of the Midianites and Amalekites as in Judg. vii, 12: "Lying in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and as to their camels, no number, like the sand which is upon the shore of the sea for multitude." So the emotion of David prompts him to speak of Saul and Jonathan as swifter than eagles and stronger than lions (2 Sam. i, 23). Other scriptural examples of this figure are the following: "All night I make my bed to swim; with my tears I dissolve my couch" (Psa. vi, 6). "Would that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears; and I would weep day and night the slain of the daughter of my people" (Jer. ix, 1). "There are also many other things which Jesus did, which things, if written every one, I suppose that the world itself would not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi, 25). Such exaggerated expressions, when not overdone, or occurring too frequently, strike the attention and make an agreeable impression on the mind.

Irony.

Another peculiar form of speech, deserving a passing notice here, is irony, by which a speaker or writer says the very opposite of what he intends. Elijah's language to the Baal worshippers (1 Kings xviii, 27) is an example of most effective irony. Another example is Job xii, 1: "True it is that ye are the people, and with you wisdom will die!" In 1 Cor. iv, 8, Paul indulges in the following ironical vein: "Already ye are filled; already ye are become rich; without us ye have reigned; and I would indeed that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." On this passage Meyer remarks: "The discourse, already in

[1] The interrogative construction of this passage given above is maintained by many of the best interpreters and critics, ancient and modern (as Augustine, Ambrosiaster, Koppe, Reiche, Köllner, Olshausen, De Wette, Griesbach, Lachmann, Alford, Webster, and Jowett), and seems to us, on the whole, the most simple and satisfactory. But see other constructions advocated in Meyer and Lange.

verse 7, roused to a lively pitch, becomes now bitterly ironical, heaping stroke on stroke, even as the proud Corinthians, with their partisan conduct, needed an admonition (*νουθεσία*, ver. 14) to teach them humility." The designation of the thirty pieces of silver, in Zech. xi, 13, as "a glorious price," is an example of sarcasm. Words of derision and scorn, like those of the soldiers in Matt. xxvii, 30: "Hail, King of the Jews!" and those of the chief priests and scribes in Mark xv, 32: "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe," are not proper examples of irony, but of malignant mockery.

CHAPTER IV.

SIMILE AND METAPHOR.

SIMILE.

Simile defined and illustrated.

WHEN a formal comparison is made between two different objects, so as to impress the mind with some resemblance or likeness, the figure is called a simile. A beautiful example is found in Isa. lv, 10, 11: "For as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens, and thither do not return, but water the land, and cause it to bear and to sprout, and it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be which goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but do that which I desired, and be successful in what I sent it." The apt and varied allusions of this passage set forth the beneficial efficacy of God's word in a most impressive style. "The images chosen," observes Delitzsch, "are rich with allusions. As snow and rain are the mediate cause of growth, and thus also of the enjoyment of what is harvested, so also by the word of God the ground and soil of the human heart is softened, refreshed, and made fertile and vegetative, and this word gives the prophet, who is like the sower, the seed which he scatters, and it brings with it bread that nourishes the soul; for every word that proceeds from the mouth of God is bread" (Deut. viii, 3).[1] Another illustration of the word of God appears in Jer. xxiii, 29: "Is not my word even as the fire, saith Jehovah, and as a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" Here are portrayed the fury and force of the divine word against false

[1] Biblical Commentary on Isaiah, in loco.

prophets. It is a word of judgment that burns and smites the sinful offender unto utter ruin, and the intensity of its power is enhanced by the double simile.

The tendency of the Hebrew writers to crowd several similes together is noticeable, and this may be in part accounted for by the nature of Hebrew parallelism. Thus in Isa. i, 8: "The daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard; as a night-lodge in a field of cucumbers; as a city besieged." And again in verse 30: "Ye shall be as an oak withering in foliage, and as a garden to which there is no water." And in xxix, 8: "It shall be as when the hungry dreams, and lo, he is eating, and he awakes, and his soul is empty; and as when the thirsty dreams, and lo, he is drinking, and he awakes, and lo, he is faint, and his soul is eagerly longing: so shall be the multitude of all the nations that are warring against Mount Zion." But though the figures are thus multiplied, they have a natural affinity, and are not open to the charge of being mixed or confused. Crowding of similes together.

Similes are of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures, and being designed to illustrate an author's meaning, they involve no difficulties of interpretation. When the Psalmist says: "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I have become as an owl of desert places; I watch and am become as a solitary sparrow on a roof" (Psa. cii, 6), he conveys a vivid picture of his utter loneliness. An image of gracefulness and beauty is presented by the language of Cant. ii, 9: "My beloved is like a roe, or a young fawn." Compare verse 16, and chapter iv, 1–5. Ezekiel (xxxii, 2) compares Pharaoh to a young lion of the nations, and a dragon (crocodile) in the seas. It is said in Matt. xvii, 2, that when Jesus became transfigured "his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light." In Matt. xxviii, 3, it is said of the angel who rolled the stone from the sepulchre, that "his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow." In Rom. xii, 4, the apostle illustrates the unity of the Church and the diversity of its individual ministers by the following comparison: "Even as in one body we have many members, and all the members have not the same work: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." Compare also 1 Cor. xii, 12. In all these and other instances the comparison is self-interpreting, and the main thought is intensified by the imagery. Similes self-interpreting.

A fine example of simile is that at the close of the sermon on the mount (Matt. vii, 24–27): "Every one therefore who hears these words of mine, and does them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock." Whether we here take the

ὁμοιωθήσεται, *shall be likened*, as a prediction of what will take place in the final judgment—I will then make him like; show as a matter of fact that he is like (Tholuck, Meyer), or as simply the predicate of formal comparison (the future tense merely contemplating future cases as they shall arise), the similitude is in either case the same. We have on the one hand the figure of a house based upon the immovable rock, which neither storm nor flood can shake; on the other of a house based upon the shifting sand, and unable to resist the violence of winds and floods. The similitude, thus formally developed, becomes, in fact, a parable, and the mention of *rains*, *floods*, and *winds* implies that the house is to be tested at *roof*, *foundation*, and *sides*—top, bottom, and middle. But we should not, like the mystics, seek to find some special and distinct form of temptation in these three words. The grand similitude sets forth impressively the certain future of those who hear and obey the words of Jesus, and also of those who hear and refuse to obey. Compare with this similitude the allegory in Ezek. xiii, 11–15.

Pleasures afforded by simile.

Blair traces the pleasure we take in comparisons of this kind to three different sources. "First, from the pleasure which nature has annexed to that act of the mind by which we compare two objects together, trace resemblances among those that are different, and differences among those that resemble each other; a pleasure, the final cause of which is to prompt us to remark and observe, and thereby to make us advance in useful knowledge. This operation of the mind is naturally and universally agreeable, as appears from the delight which even children have in comparing things together, as soon as they are capable of attending to the objects that surround them. Secondly, the pleasure of comparison arises from the illustration which the simile employed gives to the principal object; from the clearer view of it which it presents, or the stronger impression of it which it stamps upon the mind. And, thirdly, it arises from the introduction of a new, and commonly a splendid object, associated to the principal one of which we treat; and from the agreeable picture which that object presents to the fancy; new scenes being thereby brought into view, which, without the assistance of this figure, we could not have enjoyed." [1]

Assumed comparisons or illustrations.

There is, common to all languages, a class of illustrations, which might be appropriately called assumed comparisons. They are not, strictly speaking, either similes, or metaphors, or parables, or allegories, and yet they include some elements of them all. A fact or figure is introduced for

[1] Lectures on Rhetoric, lecture xvii.

the sake of illustration, and yet no formal words of comparison are used. But the reader or hearer perceives at once that a comparison is assumed. Sometimes such assumed comparisons follow a regular simile. In 2 Tim. ii, 3, we read: "Partake thou in hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." But immediately after these words, and keeping the figure thus introduced in his mind, the apostle adds: "No one on service as a soldier entangles himself with the affairs of life; in order that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier." Here is no figure of speech, but the plain statement of a fact fully recognized in military service. But following the simile of verse 3, it is evidently intended as a further illustration, and Timothy is left to make his own application of it. And then follow two other illustrations, which it is also assumed the reader will apply for himself. "And if also any one contend as an athlete, he is not crowned if he did not lawfully contend. The labouring husbandman must first partake of the fruits." These are plain, literal statements, but a comparison is tacitly assumed, and Timothy could not fail to make the proper application. The true minister's close devotion to his proper work, his cordial submission, and conformity to lawful authority and order, and his laborious activity, are the points especially emphasized by these respective illustrations. So, again, in verses 20 and 21 of the same chapter: "In a great house there are not only vessels golden and silver, but also wooden and earthen ones, and some unto honour and some unto dishonour." Here is a simple statement of facts intended for an illustration, but not presented as a simile. It is suggested by the metaphor in the preceding verse, in which the Lord's own chosen, the pure who confess his name, are represented as the firm foundation laid by God, a beautifully inscribed substructure, which, however, is to be gradually builded upon until the edifice becomes complete.[1] Its real character and purport are as if the apostle had said: "And now, for illustration, consider how, in a great house," etc. What he says of this house is, in itself, no figure, but a literal statement of what was commonly found in any extensive building; but in verse 21 he makes his own application thus: "If, therefore, any one purify himself from these (persons like the troublesome errorists, as the babblers, Hymenæus, etc., verses 16, 17, considered as vessels unto dishonour), he shall be as a vessel unto honour, sanctified, useful to the Master, unto every good work prepared."

Literal statement, but implied comparison.

A similar example of extended illustration appears in Matt. vii, 15–20: "Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's

[1] Compare what is said on Peter, the living stone, pp. 124–127.

clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." Here is a bold, strong metaphor, obliging us to think of the false teacher as a wolf covered over and concealed from outward view by the skin of a sheep. But the next verse introduces another figure entirely: "From their fruits ye will know them;" and then to make the figure plainer, our Lord asks: "Do they gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?" The question demands a negative answer, and is itself an emphatic way of making such answer. Thereupon he proceeds, using the formula of comparison: "So every good tree produces good fruit, and the bad tree produces bad fruit;" and then, dropping formal comparison, he adds: "A good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and cast into fire. Therefore (in view of these well-known facts, adduced as illustrations, I repeat the statement made a moment ago, verse 16), from their fruits ye will know them." It will be shown in a subsequent chapter how all true parables are essentially similes, but all similes are not parables. The examples of assumed comparison, given above, though distinguished from both simile and parable proper, contain essential elements of both.

Metaphor.

Metaphor defined and illustrated.

Metaphor is an implied comparison, and is of much more frequent occurrence in all languages than simile. It differs from the latter in being a briefer and more pungent form of expression, and in turning words from their literal meaning to a new and striking use. The passage in Hos. xiii, 8: "I will devour them like a lion," is a simile or formal comparison; but Gen. xlix, 9: "A lion's whelp is Judah," is a metaphor. We may compare something to the savage strength and rapacity of a lion, or the swift flight of an eagle, or the brightness of the sun, or the beauty of a rose, and in each case we use the words in their literal sense. But when we say, Judah is a lion, Jonathan was an eagle, Jehovah is a sun, my beloved one is a rose, we perceive at once that the words lion, eagle, etc., are not used literally, but only some notable quality or characteristic of these creatures is intended. Hence metaphor, as the name denotes (Greek, *μεταφέρω*, to *carry over*, to *transfer*), is that figure of speech in which the sense of one word is transferred to another. This process of using words in new constructions is constantly going on, and, as we have seen in former chapters, the tropical sense of many words becomes at length the only one in use. Every language is, therefore, to a great extent, a dictionary of faded metaphors.

The sources from which scriptural metaphors are drawn are to be looked for chiefly in the natural scenery of the lands of the Bible, the customs and antiquities of the Orient, and the ritual worship of the Hebrews.[1] In Jer. ii, 13, we have two very expressive metaphors: "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, a fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." A fountain of living waters, especially in such a land as Palestine, is of inestimable worth; far more valuable than any artificial well or cistern, that can at best only catch and hold rain water, and is liable to become broken and lose its contents. What insane folly for a man to forsake a living fountain to hew for himself an uncertain cistern! The ingratitude and apostasy of Israel are strikingly characterized by the first figure, and their self-sufficiency by the second. Examples of metaphor drawn from natural scenery.

In Job ix, 6, a violent earthquake is represented as Jehovah "causing the land to move from her place, and making her columns tremble." The whole land affected by the earthquake shock is conceived as a building, heaved out of place, and all her pillars or columnar supports trembling and tottering to their fall. In chapter xxvi, 8, the holding of the rain in the heavens is pictured as God "binding up the waters in his dark cloud (עב), and the cloud (ענן, cloud-covering) is not rent under them." The clouds are conceived as a great sheet or bag, strong enough to hold the immense weight of waters. In Deut. xxxii, 40, Jehovah is represented as saying: "For I will lift up to heaven my hand, and say, living am I forever." Here the allusion is to the ancient custom of lifting up the hand to heaven in the act of making a solemn oath. In verse 42 we have these further images: "I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh." By these metaphors arrows are personified as living things, intoxicated with drinking the blood of Jehovah's slaughtered foes, and the sword, as a ravenous beast of prey, devouring their flesh. Many similar examples exhibit at one and the same time the Old Testament anthropomorphisms, together with personification and metaphor. Ancient customs.

The following strong metaphors have their basis in well-known habits of animals: "Issachar is an ass of bone, lying down between the double fold" (Gen. xlix, 14). He loves rest, like a beast of burden, especially like the strong, bony ass, that seeks repose between the sheepfolds. "Naphtali is a hind set forth, the giver of sayings of beauty" (Gen. Metaphorical allusions to the habits of animals.

[1] Compare above p. 158.

xlix, 21). The allusion here is specially to the elegance and beauty of the hind, bounding away gracefully in his freedom, and denotes in the tribe of Naphtali a taste for sayings of beauty, such as elegant songs and proverbs. As the neighbouring tribe of Zebulon produced ready writers (Judges v, 14), so, probably, Naphtali became noted for elegant speakers. "Benjamin is a wolf; he shall rend" (Gen. xlix, 27). This metaphor fitingly portrays the furious, warlike character of the Benjamites, from whom sprang an Ehud and a Saul. In Zech. vii, 11, mention is made of those who "refused to hearken, and gave a refractory shoulder," that is, acted like a refractory heifer or ox that shakes the shoulder and refuses to accept the yoke. Comp. Neh. ix, 29 and Hos. iv, 16. In Num. xxiv, 21, it is said of the Kenites, "Enduring is thy dwelling-place, and set in the rock thy nest." The secure dwellings of this tribe in the high fastnesses of the rocky hills are conceived as the nest of the eagle in the towering rock. Comp. Job xxxix, 27; Jer. xlix, 16; Obad. 4; Hab. ii, 9.

Metaphors based on Hebrew ritual.

The following metaphors are based upon practices appertaining to the worship and ritual of the Hebrews. "I will wash my palms in innocency, I will go round about thy altar, O Jehovah" (Psa. xxvi, 6). Here the allusion is to the practice of the priests who were required to wash their hands before coming near the altar to minister (Exod. xxx, 20). The psalmist expresses his purpose to conform thoroughly to Jehovah's will; he would, so to speak, offer his burnt-offerings, even as the priest who goes about the altar on which his sacrifice is to be offered; and in doing so, he would be careful to conform to every requirement. In Psa. li, 7, "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall become clean," the allusion is to the ceremonial forms of purifying the leper (Lev. xiv, 6, 7) and his house (verse 51), and the person who had been defiled by contact with a dead body (Num. xix, 18, 19). So also the well-known usages of the passover, the sacrifice of the lamb, the careful removal of all leaven, and the use of unleavened bread, lie at the basis of the following metaphorical language: "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened; for our passover also has been sacrificed, even Christ; wherefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened loaves of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v, 7, 8). Here the metaphors are continued until they make an allegory.

Sometimes a writer or speaker, after having used a striking metaphor goes on to elaborate its imagery, and, by so doing, constructs an allegory; sometimes he introduces a number and variety

of images together, or, at other times, laying all figure aside, he proceeds with plain and simple language. Thus, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says: "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. v, 13). It is not difficult to grasp at once the comparison here implied. "The earth, the living world of men, is like a piece of meat, which would putrefy but that the grace of the Gospel of God, like salt, arrests the decay and purifies and preserves it."[1] But the Lord proceeds, adhering closely to the imagery of salt and its power, and develops his figure into a brief allegory: "But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" Here is a most significant query. "The apostles, and in their degree all Christians," says Whedon, "are the substance and body of that salt. They are the substance to which the saltness inheres. But if the living body to which this gracious saltness inheres doth lose this quality, wherewith shall the quality be restored? The *it* refers to the solid salt which has lost its saltness or savour. What, alas! shall ever resalt that savourless salt? The Christian is the solid salt, and the grace of God is his saltness; that grace is the very salt of the salt. This solid salt is intended to salt the world with; but, alas! who shall salt the salt?"[2] But immediately after this elaborated figure, another and different metaphor is introduced, and carried forward with still greater detail. "Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hid; nor do they light a lamp and put it under the modius, but on the stand, and it shines for all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine" (Matt. v, 14–16). Here a variety of images is presented to the mind; a light, a city on a mountain, a lamp, a lamp-stand, and a Roman modius or peck measure. But through all these varying images runs the main figure of a light designed to send its rays afar, and illumine all within its range. A metaphor thus extended always becomes, strictly speaking, an allegory. In Matt. vii, 7, we have three metaphors introduced in a single verse. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." First, we have the image of a suppliant, making a request before a superior; next, of one who is in search for some goodly pearl or treasure (comp. Matt. xiii, 45, 46); and, finally, of one who is knocking at a door for admission. The three figures are so well related that they produce no confusion, but rather serve to strengthen one another. So Paul uses with good effect a twofold metaphor in Eph. iii, 17, where he prays "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, being *rooted* and *grounded* in love." Here is the figure of a tree striking its roots

Elaborated and mixed metaphors.

[1] Whedon, Commentary, in loco. [2] Ibid.

into the soil, and of a building based upon a deep and strong foundation.[1] But these figures are accompanied both before and after with a style of language of the most simple and practical character, and not designed to elaborate or even adhere to the imagery suggested by the metaphors.

Uncertain metaphorical allusions.

Sometimes the salient point of allusion in a metaphor may be a matter of doubt or uncertainty. The opening words of Deborah's song (Judg. v, 2) have long puzzled translators and exegetes. The English version, following substantially the Syriac and Arabic, renders the Hebrew בִּפְרֹעַ פֹּרָעוֹת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, "for the avenging of Israel." The Septuagint (Alex. Codex) has, "for the leading of the leaders," but seems to have been governed by the resemblance of the word פֹּרָעוֹת to the official name of Egyptian monarchs פַּרְעֹה, Pharaoh. Neither of these translations has any certain support in Hebrew usage. The noun פֶּרַע occurs in the singular but twice (Num. vi, 5; Ezek. xliv, 20), and in both places means *a lock of hair*. The plural form of the word, פרעות, occurs only here and in Deut. xxxii, 42, and in both places would seem to mean, most legitimately, *locks of hair*, or *flowing locks*. And why should it be thought to mean any thing else? So far from being incongruous, it best suits the imagery of the immediate context in Deut. xxxii, 42. Jehovah there says: "I will make my arrows drunk with blood (Heb. מִדָּם, *from blood*), and my sword shall devour flesh—with the blood (or, from the blood) of slain and of captives, from the head of hairy locks of the enemy"—that is, from the blood of the hairy heads of the enemies. And so at the beginning of Deborah's song we may understand a bold metaphor,

[1] Meyer observes: "Paul, in the vivacity of his imagination, conceives to himself the congregation of his readers as a *plant* (comp. Matt. xiii, 3), perhaps a *tree* (Matt. vii, 17), and at the same time as a *building*." Critical Com. on Ephesians, in loco. "The perfect participles," says Braune, "denote a state in which Paul's readers are and continue to be, which is the presupposition in order that they may be able to know. . . . They mark that a profoundly penetrating life (ἐῤῥιζωμένοι) and a well grounded, permanent character (τεθεμελιωμένοι) are necessary. The double figure strengthens the notion of the relation to love; this latter (ἐν ἀγάπῃ) is made prominent by being placed first. *In* marks *love* as the soil *in* which they are rooted, and as the foundation *on* which they are grounded. This implies moreover that it is not their own love which is referred to, but one which corresponds with the soil afforded to the tree, the foundation given to the house; and this would undoubtedly be, in accordance with the context, the love of Christ, were not all closer definition wanting, even the article. Accordingly, this substantive rendered general by the absence of the article corresponds with the verbal idea: in loving, i. e., in that love, which is first God's in Christ, and then that of men who became Christians, who are rooted in him and grounded on him through faith." Commentary on Ephesians (Lange's Bible-work), in loco.

"In the loosing of locks in Israel;" for the primary meaning of the verb פָּרַע is everywhere that of *letting something loose*, and when used of locks of hair would naturally denote the loosing of the hair from all artificial coverings and restraint, and leaving it to wave wildly, as was done in the case of a Nazarite. The metaphor of the passage would thus be an allusion to the unrestrained growth of the locks of those who took upon themselves the vows of a Nazarite. And this view of the passage is corroborated by the next line of the parallelism, "In the free self-offering of the people." The people had, so to speak, by this act of consecration, made themselves free-will offerings. Nothing, therefore, could be more striking and impressive than these metaphorical allusions at the opening of this hymn:

> In[1] the loosing of locks in Israel,
> In the free self-offering of the people,
> Praise Jehovah!

In Psa. xlv, 1, "My heart boils up with a goodly word," it is difficult to determine whether the allusion is to an overflowing fountain, or to a boiling pot. The primary idea, according to Gesenius, lies in the noise of water boiling or bubbling, and as the word רָחַשׁ occurs nowhere else, but its derivative, מִרְחֶשֶׁת, denotes in Lev. ii, 7; vii, 9, a pot or vessel used both for boiling and frying, it is perhaps safer to say that the allusion in the metaphor of Psa. xlv, i, is to a boiling pot. The heart of the Psalmist was hot with a holy fervour, and, like the boiling oil of the vessel in which the meat-offering was prepared, it seethed and bubbled in the rapture of exulting song.

Buried with Christ through baptism into death.

The exact point of the allusion in the words, "buried with him through baptism into death" (Rom. vi, 4), and "buried with him in baptism" (Col. ii, 12), has been disputed. The advocates of immersion insist that there is an allusion to the mode in which the rite of water baptism was performed, and most interpreters have acknowledged that such an allusion is in the word. The immersion of the candidate was thought of as a burial in the water. But the context in both passages goes to show that the great thought of the apostle was that of the believer's *death unto sin*. Thus, in Romans, "Are ye ignorant that as many

[1] The preposition בְּ, *in*, points out the condition of the people in which they conquered and sang. The song is the people's consecration hymn, and praises God for the prosperous and successful issue with which he has crowned their vows. Cassel's Commentary on Judges (Lange's Biblework), in loco. Comp. Whedon's Old Testament Commentary, in loco.

of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death. . . . We have become united with the likeness of his death (ver. 5). . . . Our old man was crucified with him (ver. 6). . . . We died with Christ (ver. 8). . . . Even so consider ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (ver. 11). Now, while the word *buried with* (συνθάπτω) would naturally accord with the idea of an immersion into water, the main thought is the *deadness unto sin*, attained through a union with Christ in *the likeness of his death*. The imagery does not depend on the mode of Christ's execution or of his burial, much less on the manner in which baptism was administered, but on *the similitude of his death* (τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ver. 5) considered as an accomplished fact. The baptism is *into death*, not into water; and whether the outward rite were performed by sprinkling, or pouring, or immersion, it would have been equally true in either case, that they were "buried with him through the baptism into the death." Or he might have said, "We were crucified with him through baptism into death;" and then as now it would have been the end accomplished, the death, not the mode of the baptism, which is made prominent. In the briefer form of expression in Col. ii, 12, it is written, simply, "having been buried with him in baptism." Here, however, the context shows that the leading thought is the same as in Rom. vi, 3–11. The burial *in baptism* (ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι, in the matter of baptism) figured "the putting off of the body of the flesh;" that is, the utter stripping off and casting aside the old carnal nature. The burial is not to be thought of as a mode of putting a corpse in a grave or sepulchre, but as indicating that the body of sin is truly dead. Having thus clearly defined the real point of the allusion it need not be denied or disputed that the figure also may include, incidentally, a reference to the practice of immersion. But, as Eadie observes, "Whatever may be otherwise said in favour of immersion, it is plain that here the burial is wholly ideal. Believers are buried in baptism, but even in immersion they do not go through a process having any resemblance to the burial and resurrection of Christ."[1] To maintain from such a metaphorical allusion, where the process and mode of burial are not in point at all, that a burial into, and a resurrection from, water, are essential to valid baptism, would seem like an extravagance of dogmatism.

[1] Commentary on the Greek Text of Colossians, in loco.

CHAPTER V.

FABLES, RIDDLES, AND ENIGMAS.

PASSING now from the more common figures of speech, we come to those peculiar tropical methods of conveying ideas and impressing truths, which hold a special prominence in the Holy Scriptures. These are known as fables, riddles, enigmas, allegories, parables, proverbs, types, and symbols. In order to appreciate and properly interpret these special forms of thought, a clear understanding of the more common rhetorical figures treated in the previous chapters is altogether necessary. For the parable will be found to correspond with the simile, the allegory with the metaphor, and other analogies will be traceable in other figures. A scientific analysis and treatment of these more prominent tropes of Scripture will require us to distinguish and discriminate between some things which in popular speech are frequently confounded. Even in the Scripture itself the proverb, the parable, and the allegory are not formally distinguished. In the Old Testament the word מָשָׁל is applied alike to the proverbs of Solomon (Prov. i, 1; x, 1; xxv, 1), the oracles of Balaam (Num. xxiii, 7; xxiv, 8), the addresses of Job (Job xxvii, 1; xxix, 1), the taunting speech against the King of Babylon (in Isa. xiv, 4, ff.), and other prophecies (Micah ii, 4; Hab. ii, 6). In the New Testament the word *παραβολή, parable,* is applied not only to what are admitted on all hands to be parables proper, but also to proverb (Luke iv, 23), and symbol (Heb. ix, 9), and type (Heb. xi, 19). John does not use the word *παραβολή* at all, but calls the allegory of the good shepherd in chap. x, 6, a *παροιμία*, which word Peter uses in the sense of a proverb or byword (2 Peter ii, 22). The word allegory occurs but once (Gal. iv, 24), and then in verbal form (*ἀλληγορούμενα*) to denote the allegorizing process by which certain Old Testament facts might be made to typify Gospel truths.

More prominent scriptural tropes.

Lowest of these special figures, in dignity and aim, is the fable. It consists essentially in this, that individuals of the brute creation, and of animate and inanimate nature, are introduced into the imagery as if possessed with reason and speech, and are represented as acting and talking contrary to the laws of their being. There is a conspicuous element of unreality about the

Characteristics of the fable.

whole machinery of fables, and yet the moral intended to be set forth is usually so manifest that no difficulty is felt in understanding it.

Jotham's fable.

The oldest fable of which we have any trace is that of Jotham, recorded in Judg. ix, 7–20. The trees are represented as going forth to choose and anoint a king. They invite the olive, the fig-tree, and the vine to come and reign over them, but these all decline, and urge that their own natural purpose and products require all their care. Then the trees invite the bramble, which does not refuse, but, in biting irony, insists that all the trees shall come and take refuge under its shadow! Let the olive-tree, and the fig-tree, and the vine come under the protecting shade of the briar! But if not, it is significantly added, "Let fire go forth from the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon." The miserable, worthless bramble, utterly unfit to shade even the smallest shrub, might, nevertheless, well serve to kindle a fire that would quickly devour the noblest of trees. So Jotham, in giving an immediate application of his fable, predicts that the weak and worthless Abimelech, whom the men of Shechem had been so fast to make king over them, would prove an accursed torch to burn their noblest leaders. All this imagery of trees walking and talking is at once seen to be purely fanciful. It has no foundation in fact, and yet it presents a vivid and impressive picture of the political follies of mankind in accepting the leadership of such worthless characters as Abimelech.

Jehoash's fable.

Another fable, quite similar to that of Jotham, is found in 2 Kings xiv, 9, where Jehoash, the King of Israel, answers the warlike challenge of Amaziah, King of Judah, by the following short and pungent apologue: "The thornbush which is in Lebanon sent to the cedar which is in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son for a wife; and there passed over a beast of the field which was in Lebanon, and trampled down the thornbush." This fable embodies a most contemptuous response to Amaziah, intimating that his pride of heart and self-conceit were moving him to attempt things far beyond his proper sphere. The beast trampling down the thornbush intimates that a passing incident, which could have no effect on a cedar of Lebanon, might easily destroy the briar. Jehoash does not proudly boast that he himself will come forth, and by his military forces crush Amaziah; but suggests that a passing judgment, an incidental circumstance, would be sufficient for that purpose, and it were therefore better for the presumptuous King of Judah to remain at home in his proper place.

The apologues of Jotham and Jehoash are the only proper fables that appear in the Bible. In the interpretation of these we should guard against pressing the imagery too far. We are not to suppose that every word and allusion has some special meaning. In the apologue of Jehoash we are not to say that the thornbush was Amaziah, and the cedar Jehoash, and the wild beast the warriors of the latter; and yet, by the contrast between the cedar and the thornbush, the king of Israel would, doubtless, impress his contempt for Amaziah upon the latter's mind, and thus seek to humiliate his pride. Neither are we to suppose that Amaziah had asked Jehoash to give his daughter in marriage to his son; nor that "Israel might properly be regarded as Jehoash's daughter, and Judah as Amaziah's son" (Thenius), as if Amaziah had formally demanded, as Josephus states, (*Ant.* ix, 9, 2), a union of the two kingdoms. Nor in the fable of Jotham are we, like some of the ancient interpreters, to understand by the olive, the fig-tree, and the vine, the three great judges that had preceded Abimelech, viz., Othniel, Deborah, and Gideon, nor seek for hidden meanings and thrusts in such words as *anoint*, *reign over us*, and *shadow*. We should always keep in mind that it is one distinguishing feature of fables that they are not exact parallels of those things to which they are designed to be applied. They are based on imaginary actions of irrational creatures, or inanimate things, and can therefore never be true to actual life.

Fabulous imagery not to be pressed too far in the interpretation.

We should also note how completely the spirit and aim of the fable accords with irony, sarcasm, and ridicule. Hence its special adaptation to expose the follies and vices of men. "It is essentially of the earth," says Trench, "and never lifts itself above the earth. It never has a higher aim than to inculcate maxims of prudential morality, industry, caution, foresight; and these it will sometimes recommend even at the expense of the higher self-forgetting virtues. The fable just reaches that pitch of morality which the world will understand and approve."[1] But this able and excellent writer goes, as we think, too far when he says that the fable has no proper place in the Scripture, "and, in the nature of things, could have none, for the purpose of Scripture excludes it." The fables noticed above are a part of the Scripture which is received as God-inspired (2 Tim. iii, 16); and though it is not God that speaks through them, but men occupying an earthly standpoint, that fact does not make good the assertion that such fables have no true place in Scripture. For the teachings of Scripture move in the

[1] Notes on the Parables, p. 10.

realm of earthly life and human thought as well as in a higher and holier element, and sarcasm and caustic rebukes find a place on the sacred page. The record of Adam's naming the beasts and fowls that were brought to him in Eden (Gen. ii, 19) suggests that their qualities and habits impressed his mind with significant analogies. Many of the most useful proverbs are abbreviated fables (Prov. vi, 6; xxx, 15, 25–28). Though the fable moves in the earthly element of prudential morality, even that element may be pervaded and taken possession of by the divine wisdom.[1]

Characteristics of the riddle.

The riddle differs from the fable in being designed to puzzle and perplex the hearer. It is purposely obscure in order to test the sharpness and penetration of those who attempt to solve it. The Hebrew word for riddle (חִידָה) is from a root which means to *twist*, or tie a knot, and is used of any dark and intricate saying, which requires peculiar skill and insight to unravel. The queen of Sheba made a journey to Solomon's court to test him with riddles (1 Kings x, 1). It is declared, at the beginning of the Book of the Proverbs, that it is the part of true wisdom "to understand a proverb and an enigma (מְלִיצָה); words of the wise and their riddles" (Prov. i, 6). The psalmist says, "I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will open on a harp my riddle" (Psa. xlix, 4). "I will open my mouth in a proverb; I will pour forth riddles of old" (lxxviii, 2). Riddles, therefore, dark sayings, enigmas, which conceal thought, and, at the same time, incite the inquiring mind to search for their hidden meanings, have a place in the Scripture.

Samson's celebrated riddle is in the form of a Hebrew couplet (Judges xiv, 14):

> Out of the eater came forth food,
> And out of strength came forth sweetness.

Samson's riddle.

The clue to this riddle is furnished in the incidents related in verses 8 and 9. Out of the carcass of a devouring beast came the food of which both Samson and his parents had eaten; and out of that which had been the embodiment of strength, came forth the sweet honey, which the bees had deposited therein. But Samson's companions, and even his parents, were not acquainted with these facts. Their ignorance, however,

[1] The profound significance of Jotham's fable is declared by Cassel to be inexhaustible. "Its truth is of perpetual recurrence. More than once was Israel in the position of the Shechemites; then, especially, when he whose kingdom is not of this world, refused to be a king. Then, too, Herod and Pilate became friends. The thornbush seemed to be king when it encircled the head of the Crucified. But Israel experienced what is here denounced: a fire went forth and consumed city and people, temple and fortress." Cassel's Commentary on Judges (Lange's Biblework), in loco.

is no ground for saying that therefore Samson's riddle was no proper riddle at all. "The ingenuity of the riddle," says Cassel, "consists precisely in this, that the ambiguity both of its language and contents can be turned in every direction, and thus conceals the answer. It is like a knot whose right end cannot be found. . . . Samson's problem distinguishes itself only by its peculiar ingenuity. It is short and simple, and its words are used in their natural signification. It is so clear as to be obscure. It is not properly liable to the objection that it refers to an historical act which no one could know. The act was one which was common in that country. Its turning point, with reference to the riddle was, not that it was an incident of Samson's personal history, but that its occurrence in general was not impossible."[1]

A notable example of riddle in the New Testament is that of the mystic number of the beast propounded in Rev. xiii, 18. "Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a man's number; and his number is six hundred sixty-six." Another very ancient reading, but probably the error of a copyist, makes the number six hundred and fourteen. This riddle has perplexed critics and interpreters through all the ages since the Apocalypse was written.[2] The number of a man would most naturally mean the numerical value of the letters which compose some man's name, and the two names which have found most favour in the solution of this problem are the Greek Λατεινος, and the Hebrew נרון קסר. Either of these names makes up the required number, and one or the other will be adopted according to one's interpretation of the symbolical beast in question. The number of the beast.

Some of the sayings of the wise in the Book of Proverbs seem to have been made purposely obscure. Who shall decide the real meaning of Prov. xxvi, 10? The English version renders: "The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors." But the margin gives us an alternative reading: "A great man grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors." Others translate: "As the archer that woundeth every one, so is he that hireth the fool, and he that hireth the passer-by." Others: "An arrow that woundeth every one is he who hireth a fool and he who hireth vagrants." Others: "A master forms all things himself, but he that hires a fool is as he that hires vagrants." And the Hebrew words of the Dark proverbs.

[1] Commentary on Judges, in loco.

[2] For the various conjectures see the leading Commentaries on the passage, especially Stuart, Elliott, and Düsterdieck.

original are susceptible of still other renderings. A proverb couched in words susceptible of so many different meanings may well be called a riddle or "dark saying." It was probably designed to puzzle, and the variety of meanings attaching to its words was a reason with the author for choosing just those words.

One of the "dark sayings of old" is the poetic fragment ascribed to Lamech (Gen. iv, 23, 24), which may be closely rendered thus:

> Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
> Wives of Lamech, listen to my saying;
> For a man have I slain for my wound,
> And a child for my bruise.
> For sevenfold avenged should Cain be,
> And Lamech seventy and seven.

Lamech's song.

The obscurity attaching to this song arises probably from our ignorance of the circumstances which called it forth. Some have supposed that Lamech was smitten with remorse over the murder of a young man, and these words are his lamentation. Others suppose he had killed a man in self-defense, or in retaliation for wounds received. Others make the song a triumphant exultation over Tubal-cain's invention of brass and iron weapons, and, translating the verb as a future "I will slay," regard the utterance as a pompous threat. Verse 24 is then understood as a blasphemous boast that he could now avenge his own wrongs ten times more thoroughly than God would avenge the slaying of Cain.[1] Possibly the whole song was originally intended as a riddle, and was as perplexing to Lamech's wives as to modern expositors.

Riddle and enigma should be distinguished.

It would be well to make a formal distinction between the riddle and the enigma, and apply the former term to such intricate sayings as deal essentially with earthly things, and are especially designed to exercise human ingenuity and shrewdness. Such were Samson's riddle, and the puzzling questions put to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba, the number of the beast, and proverbs like that noticed above (Prov. xxvi, 10). Enigmas, on the other hand, would be the more fitting name for those mystic utterances which serve both to conceal and enhance some deep and sacred thought. But the words have been so long used interchangeably of both classes of dark sayings that we can scarcely expect to change from such indiscriminate usage.

The word *enigma* (*αἴνιγμα*) occurs but once (1 Cor. xiii, 12) in the New Testament, but in the Septuagint it is employed as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew חִידָה. In 1 Cor. xiii, 12, it is used to

[1] For a full synopsis of the various interpretations of this song, see M'Clintock and Strong's Cyclopædia, article Lamech.

indicate the dim and imperfect manner in which in this life we apprehend heavenly and eternal things: "For we see now through a mirror in enigma." Most expositors take the words *in enigma* adverbially, in the sense of *darkly, dimly, in an enigmatical way.* "But *αἴνιγμα*," says Meyer, "is a dark *saying*, and the idea of the *saying* should as little be lost here as in Num. xii, 8. Luther renders rightly: *in a dark word;* which, however, should be explained more precisely as *by means of an enigmatic word*, whereby is meant the word of the Gospel revelation, which capacitates for the *seeing* (*βλέπειν*) in question, however imperfect it be, and is its medium to us. It is *αἴνιγμα*, inasmuch as it affords to us no full clearness of light upon God's decrees, ways of salvation, etc., but keeps its contents sometimes in greater, sometimes in a less, degree (Rom. xi, 33; 1 Cor. ii, 9) concealed, bound up in images, similitudes, types, and the like forms of human limitation and human speech, and consequently is for us of a mysterious and enigmatic nature, standing in need of a future *λύσις* (solution), and vouchsafing *πίστις* (faith), indeed, but not *εἶδος* (appearance, 2 Cor. v, 7)."[1]

There is an enigmatical element in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, John iii, 1–13. The profound lesson contained in the words of verse 3: "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God," perplexed and confounded the Jewish ruler. Deep in his heart the Lord, who "knew what was in man" (ii, 25), discerned his spiritual need. His thoughts were too much upon the outward, the visible, the fleshly. The miracles of Jesus had made a deep impression, and he would inquire of the great wonder-worker as of a divinely commissioned *teacher.* Jesus stops all his compliments, and surprises him with a mysterious word, which seems equivalent to saying: Do not now talk about my works, or of whence I came; turn your thoughts upon your inner self. What you need is not *new knowledge*, but *new life;* and that life can be had only by another *birth.* And when Nicodemus uttered his surprise and wonder, he was rebuked by the reflection, "Art thou the teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (ver. 10). Had not the psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God?" (Psa. li, 10). Had not the law and the prophets spoken of a divine circumcision of the heart? (Deut. xxx, 6; Jer. iv, 4; Ezek. xi, 19). Why then should such a man as Nicodemus express surprise at these deep sayings of the Lord? Simply because his heart-life and spiritual discernment were unable then to apprehend "the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii, 14). They were as a riddle to him.

Enigmatical element in Jesus' words to Nicodemus.

[1] Meyer on Corinthians, in loco.

The same style of enigmatical discourse appears in Jesus' sayings in the synagogue at Capernaum (John vi, 53–59); also in his first words to the woman of Samaria (John iv, 10–15), and in his response to the disciples when they returned and "wondered that he was talking with a woman," and asked him to eat of the food they had procured (John iv, 32–38). His reply, in this last case, was, "I have food to eat which ye do not know." They misunderstood him, as did Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. "What wonder," says Augustine, "if that woman did not understand water? Behold, the disciples do not yet understand food."[1] They wondered whether any one had brought him something to eat during their absence, and then Jesus spoke more plainly: "My food is that (ἵνα, indicating conscious aim and purpose) I shall do the will of him that sent me, and shall complete his work." His success with the Samaritan woman was to him better food than any bodily sustenance, for it elevated his soul into the holy conviction and assurance that he should successfully accomplish the whole of that work for which he came into the world. And then he proceeds, adhering still to the tone and style of intermingled enigma and allegory: "Do not ye say that there is yet a four-month, and the harvest comes? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white unto harvest. Already[2] he that reaps is receiving reward and gathering fruit into (εἰς, as into a garner) life eternal, that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together." The winning of that one Samaritan convert opens to Jesus' prophetic soul the great Gospel harvest of the near future, and he speaks of it as already at hand. Whether we regard the saying, "There is yet a four-month, and the harvest comes," as a proverb (Lightfoot, Tholuck, Lücke, De Wette, Stier), equivalent to, There is a space of four months between seedtime and harvest, or understand that the neighbouring grain fields were just sown, or just now green with the young tender grain (Meyer and many), and over them many Samaritans appeared coming to him (ver. 30), the great thought is still the same, and emphasizes the actual joy of Jesus in that hour of ingathering. Sower and reaper were together there and then, but the disciples could scarcely take in the full import of Jesus' glowing words. "The disciples saw no harvest field; they said and they thought assuredly, There must be at least four months yet! But the Lord sets before them a mystery

[1] In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus xv, 31.

[2] Most of the oldest and best manuscript authorities omit καὶ after ἤδη, and many of the best critics join ἤδη with what follows. So Schulz, Tischendorf, Godet, and Westcott and Hort.

and an enigma, and thereby would teach them to lift up aright the eyes of their faith. *Behold*, I say unto you, I have now been sowing the word, and already behold a sudden harvest upspringing and ready. Should not this be my meat and my joy? O ye, my reapers, rejoice together with me, the sower, and forget ye also to eat!" [1]

Enigma of the sword in Luke xxii, 36.

The words of Jesus in Luke xxii, 36, are an enigma. As he was about to go out to Gethsemane he discerned that the hour of peril was at hand. He reminded his disciples of the time when he sent them forth without purse, wallet, or shoes (Luke ix, 1–6), and drew from them the acknowledgement that they had then lacked nothing. "But now," said he, "he that has a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that has not, let him sell his mantle, and buy a sword." He would impress them with the feeling that the time of fearful conflict and exposure was now imminent. They must expect to be assailed, and should be prepared for all righteous self-defense. They would see times when a sword would be worth more to them than a mantle. But our Lord, evidently, did not mean that they should, literally, arm themselves with the weapons of a carnal warfare, and use the sword to propagate his cause (Matt. xxvi, 52; John xviii, 36). He would significantly warn them of the coming bitter conflict and opposition they must meet. The world would be against them, and assail them in many a hostile form, and they should therefore prepare for self-defense and manly encounter. It is not the sword of the Spirit (Eph. vi, 17) of which the Lord here speaks, but the sword as the symbol of that warlike heroism, that bold and fearless confession, and that inflexible purpose to maintain the truth, which would soon be a duty and a necessity on the part of the disciples in order to defend their faith. But the disciples misunderstood these enigmatical words, and spoke of two swords which they had with them! Jesus paused not to explain, and broke off that conversation "in the tone of one who is conscious that others would not yet understand him, and who, therefore, holds further speech unprofitable." [2] His laconic answer, *it is enough*, was "a gentle turning aside of further discussion, with a touch of sorrowful irony. More than your two swords ye need not!" [3]

Enigmatical words to Peter, John xxi, 18.

A similar enigma appears in John xxi, 18, where Jesus says to Simon Peter: "When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old another shall gird thee and carry thee

[1] Stier, Words of Jesus, in loco.
[2] Van Oosterzee's Commentary on Luke (Lange's Biblework), in loco.
[3] Meyer, in loco.

whither thou wouldest not." The writer immediately adds that Jesus thereby signified (*σημαίνων*) "by what death he should glorify God." But it is scarcely probable that Peter then fully comprehended the saying. Comp. also John ii, 19.

The two eagles of Ezek. xvii, 1–10.

The prophetic picture of the two eagles in Ezek. xvii, 2–10, is a mixture of enigma (חִידָה) and fable (מָשָׁל). It is fabulous so far as it represents the eagles as acting with human intelligence and will, but, aside from this, its imagery belongs rather to the sphere of prophetic symbols. Altogether, it is an enigma of high prophetic character, a "dark saying," in which the real meaning is concealed behind typical images. In its interpretation we need to take the whole chapter together, and we observe that it has three distinct parts: (1) The enigma (verses 1–10); (2) its interpretation (11–21); (3) a Messianic prophecy based upon the foregoing imagery (22–24). The great eagle represents the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. The "great wings, with long pinions, full of feathers of many colours" (ver. 3), altogether furnish a striking figure of majesty, rapidity of movement, and splendour of regal power. Most expositors explain the great wings as denoting the wide dominion of this eagle; the long pinions as the extent and energy of his military power; the fulness of feathers to the multitude of subjects; and the many colours to the diversity of their nations, languages, and customs. But the tracing of such special allusions in the natural appendages of the eagle is of doubtful worth, and should not be made prominent. It is better to understand in a more general way the strength, rapidity, and glory of Nebuchadnezzar. Lebanon is mentioned because of its being the natural home of the cedar, but it here represents Jerusalem (ver. 12), which was the home and seat of the royal seed of Judah. The leafy crown and topmost shoots of the cedar are the king and princes of Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon (2 Kings xxiv, 14, 15). Babylon is here called, enigmatically, "a land of Canaan," because its commerce and its diplomacy had made it "a city of merchants." Its self-seeking spirit of policy and trade made it a land of Canaan (Eng. Ver., "traffic").

And now the figure changes. The eagle "took of the seed of the land," of the same land where the cedar grew, "and put it in a field of seed" (ver. 5) where it had every chance to grow. Nay, he took it upon many waters as one would plant a willow; that is, with the care and foresight that one would exercise in setting a willow in a well-watered soil in which alone it can flourish. But this "seed of the land" was not the seed of a willow, but of a vine, and it "sprouted and became a spreading vine of low stature;"

and it was the plan of the eagle that this lowly vine should "turn its branches toward him, and its roots under him" (ver. 6). The "seed of the land" (ver. 5) was the royal seed of the kingdom of Judah (ver. 13), Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar made king in Jerusalem after the capture of Jehoiachin (2 Kings xxiv, 17).

The other great eagle was the king of Egypt, less mighty and glorious than the other. Toward this second eagle the vine turned her roots and sent forth her branches (ver. 7). The impotent but rebellious Zedekiah "sent his messengers to Egypt" for horses and people to help him against Nebuchadnezzar (ver. 15). But it was all in vain. He who broke his covenant and despised his oath (ver. 18) could not prosper; it required no great arm or many people to uproot and destroy such a feeble vine. The eagle of Egypt was powerless to help, and the Chaldæan forces, like a destructive east wind (ver. 10), utterly withered it away. All this is brought out forcibly in the solemn words of the "oracle of the Lord Jehovah," verses 16–21.

Thus far the imagery has been a mixture of fable and symbol,[1] but with verse 22 the prophet enters a higher plane of prophecy. The eagles drop out of view entirely, and Jehovah himself takes from the leafy crown of the high cedar a tender shoot (comp. Isa. xi, 1; liii, 2) and plants it upon the lofty mountain of Israel, where it becomes a glorious cedar to shelter and shade "every bird of every wing." This is a noble prophecy of the Messiah, springing from the stock of Judah, and developing from the holy "mountain of the house of Jehovah" (Micah iv, 1, 2) a kingdom of marvellous growth and of gracious protection to all who may seek its shelter. We should note especially how the Messianic prophecy here leaves the realm of fable and takes on the style of allegory and parable. Comp. Matt. xiii, 31, 32.

[1] Schröder observes that the mixed figure here used by Ezekiel goes far beyond mere popular illustration, and must not "be explained away from the æsthetic standpoint, as merely another rhetorical garb for the thought. As in the parable the emblematic form preponderates over the thought, so also here. What the prophet is to say to Israel is said by the whole of that mighty array of figurative expression, for which the animal and vegetable worlds furnish the figures. But the eagle does what eagles otherwise never do; and what is planted as a willow grows as a vine; and the vine is represented as falling in love with the other eagle. The contradictory character of such a representation, and the fact that in the difficulties to be solved (ver. 9, sq.) the comparison comes to a stand, and the closing Messianic portion in which the whole culminates, convert the parable into a riddle. A trace of irony and the moral tendency, such as belong to the fable, are not wanting." Commentary on Ezekiel (in Lange's Bibelwork), in loco.

CHAPTER VI.

INTERPRETATION OF PARABLES.

Among the figurative forms of scriptural speech the parable has a notable pre-eminence. We find a number of examples in the Old Testament, and the esteem in which this mode of teaching was held by the ancient Jews is apparent from the following words of the son of Sirach:

Pre-eminence of parabolic teaching.

> He who gives his soul and exercises his mind in the law of the Most High
> Will seek out the wisdom of the ancients,
> And will be occupied with prophecies.
> He will observe the utterances of men of fame,
> And will enter with them into the twists (στροφαῖς) of parables.
> He will seek out the hidden things of proverbs,
> And busy himself with the enigmas of parables.[1]

Parables are especially worthy of our study, inasmuch as they were the chosen methods by which our Lord set forth many revelations of his heavenly kingdom. They were also employed by the great rabbis who were contemporary with Jesus, and they frequently appear in the Talmud and other Jewish books. Among all the oriental peoples they appear to have been a favourite form of conveying moral instruction, and find a place in the literature of most nations.

The word *parable* is derived from the Greek verb παραβάλλω, to *throw* or *place by the side of*, and carries the idea of placing one thing by the side of another for the purpose of comparison. The word has been somewhat vaguely used, as we have seen above,[2] to represent the Hebrew מָשָׁל, and to designate proverbs, types, and symbols (as in Luke iv, 23; Heb. ix, 9; xi, 19). But, strictly speaking, the parable belongs to a style of figurative speech which constitutes a class of its own. It is essentially a comparison, or simile, and yet all similes are not parables. The simile may appropriate a comparison from any kind or class of objects, whether real or imaginary. The parable is limited in its range, and confined to that which is real. Its imagery always embodies a narrative which is true to the facts and experiences of human life. It makes no use, like the fable, of talking birds and

The parable defined.

[1] Ecclesiasticus xxxix, 1–3.

[2] See above on p. 177.

beasts, or of trees in council. Like the riddle and enigma, it may serve to conceal a truth from those who have not spiritual penetration to perceive it under its figurative form; but its narrative style, and the formal comparison always announced or assumed, differentiate it clearly from all classes of knotty sayings which are designed mainly to puzzle and confuse. The parable, when once understood, unfolds and illustrates the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The enigma may embody profound truths, and make much use of metaphor, but it never, like the parable, forms a narrative, or assumes to make a formal comparison. The parable and the allegory come nearer together, so that, indeed, parables have been defined as "historical allegories;" [1] but they differ from each other in substantially the same way as simile differs from metaphor. The parable is essentially a formal comparison, and requires its interpreter to go beyond its own narrative to bring in its meaning; the allegory is an extended metaphor, and contains its interpretation within itself. The parable, therefore, stands apart by itself as a mode and style of figurative speech. It moves in an element of sober earnestness, never transgressing in its imagery the limits of probability, or of what might be actual fact. It may tacitly take up within itself essential elements of enigma, type, symbol, and allegory, but it differs from them all, and in its own chosen sphere of real, every-day life, is peculiarly adapted to body forth special teachings of Him who is "the *Verax*, no less than the *Verus*, and the *Veritas*." [2]

The general design of parables, as of all other kinds of figurative language, is to embellish and set forth ideas and moral truths in attractive and impressive forms. Many a moral lesson, if spoken in naked, literal style, is soon forgotten; but, clothed in parabolic dress, it arouses attention, and fastens itself in the memory. Many rebukes and pungent warnings may be couched

General use of parables.

[1] Davidson's Hermeneutics, p. 311.

[2] Trench on the Miracles, p. 127. This eminent divine, whose work on the parables is one of the best of its kind, traces to considerable extent the differences between the parable, the fable, the myth, the proverb, and the allegory, and sums up as follows: "The parable differs from the fable, moving as it does in a spiritual world, and never transgressing the actual order of things natural; from the mythus, there being in the latter an unconscious blending of the deeper meaning with the outward symbol, the two remaining separate and separable in the parable; from the proverb, inasmuch as it is longer carried out, and not merely accidentally and occasionally, but necessarily figurative; from the allegory, comparing as it does one thing *with* another, at the same time preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, not transferring, as does the allegory, the proprieties, and qualities, and relations of one *to* the other."—Notes on the Parables, pp. 15, 16. New York, 1857.

in a parable, and thereby give less offence, and yet work better effects than open plainness of speech could do. Nathan's parable (in 2 Sam. xii, 1–4) prepared the heart of David to receive with profit the keen reproof he was about to administer. Some of our Lord's most pointed parables against the Jews—parables which they perceived were directed against themselves—embodied reproof, rebuke, and warning, and yet by their form and drapery, they served to shield him from open violence (Matt. xxi, 45; Mark xii, 12; Luke xx, 19). It is easy, also, to see that a parable may enshrine a profound truth or mystery which the hearers may not at first apprehend, but which, because of its striking or memorable form, abides more firmly in the mind, and so abiding, yields at length its deep and precious meaning.[1]

Special reason and purpose of the parables of Jesus.

The special reason and purpose of the parables of Jesus are stated in Matt. xiii, 10–17. Up to that point in his ministry Jesus appears not to have spoken in parables. "The words of grace (*λόγια τῆς χάριτος*) which proceeded from his mouth" (Luke iv, 22) in the synagogue, by the seashore, and on the mount, were direct, simple, and plain. He used simile and metaphor in the sermon on the mount, and elsewhere. In the synagogue at Nazareth he quoted a familiar proverb and called it a parable (Luke iv, 23). His words had power and authority, unlike those of the scribes, and the people were astonished at his teaching. But there came a time when he notably changed his style. His simple precepts were often met with derision and scorn, and among the multitudes there were always some who were anxious to pervert his sayings. When multitudes gathered by the sea of Galilee to hear him, "and he spoke to them many things in parables" (Matt. xiii, 3), his disciples quickly observed the change and asked him, "Why in parables dost thou speak to them?" Our Lord's answer is remarkable for its blended use of metaphor, proverb, and enigma, so combined and connected with a prophecy of Isaiah (vi, 9, 10), that it becomes in itself one of the profoundest of his discourses.

> Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it is not given. For whosoever has, to him shall be given and he shall superabound; but whosoever has not, even what he has

[1] Trench writes of our Lord's parables: "His words laid up in the memory were to many that heard them like the money of another country, unavailable, it might be, for present use, of which they knew not the value, but which yet was ready in their hand when they reached that land and were naturalized in it. When the Spirit came and brought all things to their remembrance, then he filled all the outlines of truth which they before possessed with its substance, quickened all its forms with the power and spirit of life."—Notes on the Parables, p. 28.

shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor understand. And with them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, By hearing ye shall hear and in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see and in no wise perceive; for thick became the heart of this people, and they heard heavily with their ears, and their eyes they closed, lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and with their ears hear, and with the heart understand, and should turn again, and I should heal them. Matt. xiii, 11–15.

Parables both reveal and conceal truth.

The great thought in this answer seems to be that the Lord had a twofold purpose in the use of parables, namely, both to reveal and to conceal great truths.[1] There was, first, that inner circle of followers who received his word with joy, and who, like those who shared in the secret counsels of other kingdoms, were gifted to know the mysteries of the Messianic reign,[2] long hidden, but now about to be made known (comp. Rom. xi, 25; xvi, 25; Col. i, 26). These should realize the truth of the proverb, "Whosoever has to him shall be given," etc. This proverb expresses in an enigmatical way a most weighty and wonderful law of experience in the things of God. He who is gifted with a desire to know God, and to appropriate rightly the provisions of his grace, shall increase in wisdom and knowledge more and more by the manifold revelations of divine truth. But the man of opposite character, who has heart, soul, and mind wherewith to love God, but is unwilling to use his powers in earnest search for the truth, shall lose even what he seems to have.[3] His powers will become weak and worthless by inactivity, and like the slothful servant in the parable of the talents,[4] he will lose that which should have been his glory.

[1] The *ἵνα* in the parallel passages of Mark iv, 12 and Luke viii, 10 shows that our Lord teaches in these words the *final end* and *purpose* of his parables, not merely their results. The quotation from Isaiah evinces the same thing.

[2] "The kingdom of heaven," says Stier, "is itself a mystery for the natural earthly understanding, and, like earthly kingdoms, it has its *state secrets*, which cannot and ought not to be cast before every one. When, on a frank and friendly approach being made, no feeling of loyalty shows itself, but rather a threatening of rebellion, then it is wise and reasonable to draw a veil, which, however, is willingly removed whenever any faithful one wishes to join himself more nearly to the king."—Words of the Lord Jesus, in loco.

[3] So Luke (viii, 18) expresses the thought: *Καὶ ὃ δοκεῖ ἔχειν.* On which Stier remarks: "For every *ἔχων* (one having) who does not keep (*κατέχει*) is only a *δοκῶν ἔχειν* (one seeming to have) in a manifold sense. It is an imaginary having, the nothingness of which is to be made manifest by a so-called taking, which yet properly takes nothing from him. It is a having which has become lost through his unfaithfulness (2 John 8)."

[4] Of whom the same proverb is used again, and more fully illustrated, Matt. xxv, 28, 29. Comp. also John xv, 2.

Parables a test of character.

And so the use of parables, in our Lord's teaching, became a test of character. With those disposed to know and accept the truth the words of a parable served to arouse attention and to excite inquiry. If they did not at first apprehend the meaning, they would come, like the disciples to the Master (Matt. xiii, 36; Mark iv, 10), and inquire of him, assured that all who asked, searched, or knocked (Matt. vii, 7) at the door of Divine Wisdom should certainly obtain their desire. Even those who at first are dull of apprehension may be attracted and captivated by the outer form of the parable, and by honest inquiry come to master the laws of interpretation until they "know all parables" (Mark iv, 13). But the perverse and fleshly mind shows its real character by making no inquiry and evincing no desire to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Such a mind treats those mysteries as a species of folly (1 Cor. i, 18).

Superior beauty and appropriateness of Scripture parables.

The parables of the Bible are remarkable for their beauty, variety, conciseness, and fulness of meaning. There is a noticeable appropriateness in the parables of Jesus, and their adaptation to the time and place of their first utterance. The parable of the sower was spoken by the seaside (Matt. xiii, 1, 2), whence might have been seen, at no great distance off, a sower actually engaged in sowing his seed. The parable of the dragnet in the same chapter (verses 47–50) may have been occasioned by the sight of such a net close by. The parable of the nobleman going into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom (Luke xix, 12) was probably suggested by the case of Archelaus, who made a journey from Judea to Rome to plead his right to the kingdom of Herod his father.[1] As Jesus had just passed through Jericho and was approaching Jerusalem, perhaps the sight of the royal palace which Archelaus had recently rebuilt at Jericho[2] suggested the allusion. Even the literal narrative of some of the parables is in the highest degree beautiful and impressive. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x, 30–37) was probably based on fact. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notably infested by robbers, and yet, leading as it did from Perea to the holy city, it would be frequented by priests and Levites passing to and fro. The coldness and neglect of the ministers of the law, and the tender compassion of the Samaritan, are full of interest and rich in suggestions. The narrative of the Prodigal Son has been called "the pearl and crown of all the parables of Scripture," and "a gospel in a gospel."[3] We never tire of its literal

[1] Josephus, Ant., xvii, 9, 1 ff. 11, 4.

[2] Ibid., xvii, 11, 13.

[3] Comp. Trench on the Parables, p. 316.

statements, for they are as full of naturalness and beauty as they are of lessons of sin and redemption.

The parable is commonly assumed to have three parts, (1) the occasion and scope, (2) the similitude, in the form of a real narrative, and (3) the moral and religious lessons. These three parts are called by Salmeron, Glassius, and others, the *root* or *basis* (radix), the *bark* or *covering* (cortex), and the *marrow* (medulla) or inner substance and core.[1] The last two are often called, respectively, the protasis and the apodosis. The main thing in the construction of a parable is its similitude, or literal narrative, for this always appears, and constitutes the parable as a figure of speech. The occasion and scope, as well as the internal sense, are not always expressed. In most cases, in fact, the apodosis, or inner sense, is left for the hearer to find out for himself, and sometimes the occasion and scope are difficult to determine. But our Lord himself has given us two examples of interpreting parables;[2] and frequently the scope and application of the parable are formally stated in the context, so that, with but few exceptions, the parables of Scripture are not difficult to explain.[3]

Three essential elements of a parable.

As every parable essentially involves the three elements named above, the hermeneutical principles which should guide us in understanding all parables are mainly three. First, we should determine the historical occasion and aim of the parable; secondly, we should make an accurate analysis

Three principal Rules for interpreting parables.

[1] Salmeron, De Parabolis Domini nostri, tr. iii, p. 15. Glassius, Philologia Sacra (Lips. 1725) lib. ii, pars i, tr. ii, sect. 5. Horne (Introduction, ed. Ayre and Treg., vol. ii, p. 346) adopts the same division, and calls the three parts, respectively, the *root* or *scope*, the *sensible similitude*, and the *explanation* or *mystical* sense. Davidson (Hermeneutics, p. 311) says: "In the parable as in the allegory three things demand attention: (1) The thing to be illustrated; (2) the example illustrating; (3) the *tertium comparationis*, or the similitude existing between them."

[2] Namely, in the interpretation of the parables of the sower (Matt. xiii, 18–23) and of the tares of the field (Matt. xiii, 36–43). Trench observes, "that when our Lord himself interpreted the two first which he delivered, it is more than probable that he intended to furnish us with a key for the interpretation of all. These explanations, therefore, are most important, not merely for their own sakes, but as laying down the principles and canons of interpretation to be applied throughout."—Notes on the Parables, p. 36.

[3] Trench (Parables, p. 32) beautifully observes: "The parables, fair in their outward form, are yet fairer within—apples of gold in network of silver: each one of them like a casket, itself of exquisite workmanship, but in which jewels yet richer than itself are laid up; or as fruit, which, however lovely to look upon, is yet more delectable still in its inner sweetness. To find the golden key for this casket, at the touch of which it shall reveal its treasures; to open this fruit, so that nothing of its hidden kernel shall be missed or lost, has naturally been regarded ever as a matter of high concern."

of the subject matter, and observe the nature and properties of the things employed as imagery in the similitude; and thirdly, we should interpret the several parts with strict reference to the general scope and design of the whole, so as to preserve a harmony of proportions, maintain the unity of all the parts, and make prominent the great central truth.[1] These principles can become of practical value only by actual use and illustration in the interpretation of a variety of parables.

Principles illustrated in the parable of the Sower.

As our Lord has left us a formal explanation of what were probably the first two parables he uttered, we do well, first of all, to note the principles of interpretation as they appear illustrated in his examples. In the parable of the sower we find it easy to conceive the position and surroundings of Jesus when he opened his parabolic discourse. He had gone out to the seaside and sat down there, but when the multitudes crowded around him, "he entered into a boat and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach" (Matt. xiii, 2). How natural and appropriate for him then and there to think of the various dispositions and characters of those before him. How like so many kinds of soil were their hearts. How was his preaching "the word of the kingdom" (verse 19) like a sowing of seed, suggested perhaps by the sight of a sower, or of a sown field, on the neighbouring coast.[2] Nay, how was his coming into the world like a going forth to sow.

Passing now to notice the similitude itself, we observe that our Lord attached significance to the seed sown, the wayside and the birds, the rocky places, the thorns, and the good ground. Each of these parts has a relevancy to the whole. In that one field where the sower scattered his grain there were all these kinds of soil, and the nature and properties of seed and soil are in perfect keeping with the results of that sowing as stated in the parable. The soil is in every case a human heart. The birds represent the evil one,[3] who is ever opposed to the work of the sower, and watches to snatch away that which is sown in the heart, "that they may not

[1] One may compare the entire parable with a circle, of which the middle point is the spiritual truth or doctrine, and of which the radii are the several circumstances of the narration; so long as one has not placed himself in the centre, neither the circle itself appears in its perfect shape, nor will the beautiful unity with which the radii converge to a single point be perceived, but this is all observed so soon as the eye looks forth from the centre. Even so in the parable, if we have recognized its middle point, its main doctrine, in full light, then will the proportion and right signification of all particular circumstances be clear unto us, and we shall lay stress upon them only so far as the main truth is thereby more vividly set forth.—Lisco, Die Parabeln Jesu, p. 22. Fairbairn's Translation (Edinburgh Bib. Cabinet), p. 29.

[2] See Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, p. 418. [3] Mark says Satan; Luke, the devil.

believe and be saved" (Luke viii, 12). He who hears the Word and understands not—on whom the heavenly truth makes no impression—may well be likened to a trodden pathway. "He has brought himself to it; he has exposed his heart as a common road to every evil influence of the world till it has become hard as a pavement—till he has laid waste the very soil in which the word of God should have taken root; and he has not submitted it to the ploughshare of the law, which would have broken it; which, if he had suffered it to do the work which God appointed it to do, would have gone before, preparing that soil to receive the seed of the Gospel."[1] With equal force and propriety the rocky places, the thorns, and the good ground represent so many varieties of hearers of the Word. The application of the parable, closing with the significant words, "he that has ears let him hear" (verse 8), might be safely left to the minds and consciences of the multitudes who heard it. Among those multitudes were doubtless many representatives of all the classes designated.

Parable of the Tares and its interpretation.

The parable of the tares of the field had the same historical occasion as that of the sower, and is an important supplement to it. In the interpretation of the foregoing parable the sower was not made prominent. The seed was declared to be "the word of the kingdom,"[2] and its character and worth are variously indicated, but no explanation was given of the sower. In this second parable the sower is prominently set forth as the Son of man, the sower of good seed; and the work of his great enemy, the devil, is presented with equal prominence. But we are not to suppose that this parable takes up and carries with it all the imagery and implications of the one preceding. Other considerations are introduced under other imagery. But in seeking the occasion and connexion of all the parables recorded in Matt. xiii, we should note how one grows out of the other as by a logical sequence. Three of them were spoken privately to the disciples, but the whole seven were appropriate for the seaside; for those of the mustard-seed, the treasure hid in a field, and the drag-net, no less than the sower and the tares of the field, may have been suggested to Jesus by the scenes around him, and those of the leaven and the merchantman seeking pearls were but counterparts, respectively, of the mustard-seed and the hid treasure. Stier's suggestion, also, is worthy of note, that the parable of the tares corresponds with the first kind of soil mentioned in the parable of the sower, and helps to answer the question, Whence and how that

[1] Trench, Notes on the Parables, p. 61.

[2] In Luke viii, 11, it is written: "The seed is the word of God."

soil had come to serve so well the purpose of the devil. The parable of the mustard-plant, whose growth was so great, stands in notable contrast with the second kind of soil in which there was no real growth at all. The parable of the leaven suggests the opposite of the heart overgrown with worldliness, namely, a heart permeated and purified by the inner workings of grace, while the fifth and sixth parables—those of the treasure and the pearl of great price—represent the various experiences of the good heart (represented by the good ground) in apprehending and appropriating the precious things of the Word of the kingdom. The seventh parable, that of the dragnet, appropriately concludes all with the doctrine of the separating judgment which shall take place "in the end of the age" (verse 49). Such an inner relation and connexion we do well to trace, and the suggestions thereby afforded may be especially valuable for homiletical purposes. They serve for instruction, but they should not be insisted on as essential to a correct interpretation of the several parables.

Things interpreted and things unnoticed in Jesus' exposition.

In the interpretation of the second parable Jesus gives special significance to the sower, the field, the good seed, the tares, the enemy, the harvest, and the reapers; also the final burning of the tares and the garnering of the wheat. But we should observe that he does *not* attach a meaning to the men who slept, nor to the sleeping, nor to the springing up of the blades of wheat, and their yielding fruit, nor to the servants of the householder and the questions they asked. These are but incidental parts of the parable, and necessary to a happy filling up of its narrative. An attempt to show a special meaning in them all would tend to obscure and confuse the main lessons. So, if we would know how to interpret all parables, we should notice what our Lord omitted as well as what he emphasized in those expositions which are given us as models; and we should not be anxious to find a hidden meaning in every word and allusion.

We may notice some things which Jesus had no need to note.

At the same time we need not deny that these two parables contained some other lessons which Jesus did not bring out in his interpretation. There was no need for him to state the occasion of his parables, or what suggested the imagery to his mind, or the inner logical connexion which they sustained to one another. These things might be safely left to every scribe who should become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xiii, 52). In his explanation of the first parable, Jesus sufficiently indicated that particular words and allusions, like the *having no root* (*τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ῥίζαν*, Matt. xiii, 6), and *choked*

(*ἀπέπνιξαν*, ver. 7; comp. *συνπνίγει* in ver. 22) may suggest important thoughts; and so the incidental words of the second parable, "lest haply while gathering up the tares ye root up the wheat with them" (verse 29), though not afterward referred to in the explanation, may also furnish lessons worthy of our consideration. So, too, it may serve a useful purpose, in interpretation, to show the fitness and beauty of any particular image or allusion. We would not expect our Lord to call the attention of his hearers to such things, but his well-disciplined disciples should not fail to note the propriety and suggestiveness of comparing the word of God to good seed, and the children of the evil one to tares.[1] The trodden path, the rocky places, and the thorny ground, have peculiar fitness to represent the several states of heart denoted thereby. Even the incidental remark "while men slept" (Matt. xiii, 25) is a suggestive hint that the enemy wrought his malicious work in darkness and secrecy, when no one would be likely to be present and interrupt him; but it would break the unity of the parable to interpret these words, as some have done, of the sleep of sin (Calovius), or the dull slowness of man's spiritual development and human weakness generally (Lange), or the careless negligence of religious teachers (Chrysostom).

Suggestive words and allusions deserve Attention and Comment.

It is also to be admitted that some incidental words, not designed to be made prominent in the interpretation, may, nevertheless, deserve attention and comment. Not a little pleasure and much instruction may be derived from the incidental parts of some parables. The hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold increase, mentioned in the parable of the sower, and in its interpretation, may be profitably compared with making the five talents increase to ten talents, and the two to four (in Matt. xxv, 16–22), and also with the increase in the parable of the pounds (Luke xix, 16–19). The peculiar expressions, "he that was sown by the wayside," "he that was sown upon the rocky places," are not, as Alford truly observes, "a confusion of similitudes—no primary and secondary interpretation of *σπόρος* [seed],—but the deep truth both of nature and of grace. The seed sown, springing up in the earth, *becomes the plant*, and bears the fruit, or fails of bearing it; it is, therefore, the representative, when sown, of the individuals of whom the discourse is."[2] Especially do we notice that the seed which, in the first parable, is said to be "the word of God" (Luke viii, 11), is defined in the second as "the

[1] Greek *ζιζάνια*, *darnel*, which is said to resemble wheat in its earlier stages of growth, but shows its real character more clearly at the harvest time.

[2] Greek Testament, in loco.

children of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii, 38). A different stage of progress is tacitly assumed, and we think of the word of God as having developed in the good heart in which it was cast until it has taken up that heart within itself and made it a new creation.[1]

Not specific rules, but sound sense and discriminating judgment must guide the interpreter.

From the above examples we may derive the general principles which are to be observed in the interpretation of parables. No specific rules can be formed that will apply to every case, and show what parts of a parable are designed to be significant, and what parts are mere drapery and form. Sound sense and delicate discrimination are to be cultivated and matured by a protracted study of all the parables, and by careful collation and comparison. Our Lord's examples of interpretation show that most of the details of his parables have a meaning; and yet there are incidental words and allusions which are not to be pressed into significance. We should, therfore, study to avoid, on the one side, the extreme of ingenuity which searches for hidden meanings in every word, and, on the other, the disposition to pass over many details as mere rhetorical figures. In general it may be said that most of the details in a parable have a meaning, and those which have no special significance in the interpretation, serve, nevertheless, to enhance the force and beauty of the rest. Such parts, as Boyle observes, "are like the feathers which wing our arrows, which, though they pierce not like the head, but seem slight things, and of a different matter from the rest, are yet requisite to make the shaft to pierce, and do both convey it to and penetrate the mark."[2] We may also add, with Trench, that "it is tolerable evidence that we have found the right interpretation of a parable if it leave none of the main circumstances unexplained. A false interpretation will inevitably betray itself, since it will invariably paralyze and render nugatory some important member of an entire account. If we have the right key in our hand, not merely some of the words, but all, will have their corresponding parts, and, moreover, the key will turn without grating or overmuch forcing; and if we have the right interpretation it will scarcely need to be defended and made plausible with great appliance of learning, to be propped up by remote allusions to rabbinical or profane literature, or by illustrations drawn from the recesses of antiquity."[3]

The prophet Isaiah, in chap. v, 1–6, sings of his Beloved Friend,

[1] "Our life," says Lange, "becomes identified with the spiritual seed, and principles assume, so to speak, a bodily shape in individuals." Commentary on Matthew, in loco.

[2] Quoted by Trench, Notes on the Parables, p. 34.

[3] Notes on the Parables, p. 39.

and his Friend's own song touching his vineyard, and in verse 7 declares that

> The vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel,
> And the man of Judah is the plant of his delight;
> And he waited for justice, and behold bloodshed,
> For righteousness, and behold a cry.

This short explanation gives the main purpose of the parable. No special meaning is put on the digging, the gathering out of the stones, the tower, and the winevat. Our Lord appropriates the imagery of this passage in his parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matt. xxi, 33–44). But to understand, in either parable, that the tower represents Jerusalem (Grotius), or the temple (Bengel), that the winevat is the altar (Chrysostom), or the prophetic institution (Irenæus), that the gathering out of the stones denotes the expulsion of the Canaanites from the Holy Land, together with the stone idols (Grotius), is to go upon doubtful ground, and introduce that which will confuse rather than elucidate. These several particulars are rather to be taken together as denoting the complete provision which Jehovah made for the security, culture, and prosperity of his people. "What is there to do more for my vineyard," he asks, "that I have not done in it?" He had spared no pains or outlay, and yet, when the time of grape harvest came, his vineyard brought forth wild grapes. What would seem to have been so full of hope and promise yielded only disappointment and chagrin. The grapes he expected were truth and righteousness; those which he found were bloodshed and oppression. He announces, accordingly, his purpose to destroy that vineyard, and make it an utter desolation, a threat fearfully fulfilled in the subsequent history of Israel and the Holy Land.

Isaiah's parable of the Vineyard.

Such is the substance of the interpretation of Isaiah's parable, but the language in which it is clothed has many beautiful strokes and delicate allusions which are worthy of attention.[1] Our Lord's parable of the wicked husbandmen, which is based upon its imagery, may be profitably noticed in connexion with it. It is

[1] Such, for instance, is the "very fertile hill" in which this vineyard was planted; literally, *in a horn, a son of oil*, or *fatness;* metaphor for a horn-shaped hill of rich soil, and used in allusion to the land of promise (comp. Deut. viii, 7–9). There is also an ironical play on the Hebrew words for *justice* and *bloodshed*, *righteousness* and *cry* in the last two lines of verse 7: "He looked for מִשְׁפָּט, *mishpat*, and behold מִשְׂפָּח, *mispach*, for צְדָקָה, *tzdhakah*, and behold צְעָקָה, *tzgnakah*." Contrast also the jubilant opening in which the prophet essays to sing his well-beloved's song with the change of person in verse 3 and the sad tone of disappointment which follows.

recorded by Matthew (xxi, 33–44), Mark (xii, 1–12), and Luke (xx, 9–18), and, though spoken in the ears of "the people" (Luke xx, 9), the chief priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees understood that it was directed against them (Matt. xxi, 45; Luke xx, 19).

Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen.

The context also informs us (in Matt. xxi, 43) that the vineyard represents "the kingdom of God." In Isaiah's parable the whole house of Israel is at fault, and is threatened with utter destruction. Here the fault is with the husbandmen to whom the vineyard was leased, and whose wickedness appears most flagrant; and here, accordingly, the threat is not to destroy the vineyard, but the husbandmen. The great questions, then, in the interpretation of our Lord's parable, are: (1) What is meant by the vineyard? (2) Who are the husbandmen, servants, and son? (3) What events are contemplated in the destruction of the husbandmen and the giving of the vineyard to others? These questions are not hard to answer: (1) The vineyard in Isaiah is the Israelitish people, considered not merely as the Old Testament Church, but also as the chosen nation established in the land of Canaan. Here it is the more spiritual idea of the kingdom of God considered as an inheritance of divine grace and truth to be so apprehended and utilized unto the honour and glory of God as that husbandmen, servants, and Son may be joint heirs and partakers of its benefits. (2) The husbandmen are the divinely commissioned leaders and teachers of the people, whose business and duty it was to guide and instruct those committed to their care in the true knowledge and love of God. They were the chief priests and scribes who heard this parable, and knew that it was spoken against them. The servants, as distinguished from the husbandmen, are to be understood of the prophets, who *were sent* as special messengers of God, and whose mission was usually to the leaders of the people.[1] But they had been mocked, despised, and maltreated in many ways (2 Chron. xxxvi, 16); Jeremiah was shut up in prison (Jer. xxxii, 3), and Zechariah was stoned (2 Chron. xxiv, 21; comp. Matt. xxiii, 34–37, and Acts vii, 52). The one son, the beloved, is, of course, the Son of man, who "came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not" (John i, 11). (3) The destruction of the wicked husbandmen was accomplished in the utter overthrow and miserable ruin of the Jewish leaders in the fall of Jerusalem. Then the avenging of "all the righteous blood" of the prophets came upon that generation (Matt. xxiii, 35, 36), and then, too, the

[1] Servants are the extraordinary ministers of God, husbandmen the ordinary. The former are almost always badly received by the latter, who take ill the interruption of their own quiet possession.—Bengel, Gnomon, in loco.

vineyard of the kingdom of God, repaired and restored as the New Testament Church, was transferred to the Gentiles.

There are many minor lessons and suggestive hints in the language of this parable, but they should not, in an exposition, be elevated into such prominence as to confuse these leading thoughts. Here, as in Isaiah, we should not seek special meanings in the hedge, winepress, and tower, nor should we make a great matter of what particular fruits the owner had reason to expect, nor attempt to identify each one of the servants sent with some particular prophet or messenger mentioned in Jewish history. Still less should we think of finding special meanings in forms of expression used by one of the evangelists and not by another. Some of these minor points may be rich in suggestions and abundantly worthy of comment, but in view of the overstraining which they have too frequently received at the hands of expositors we need the constant caution that at most they are incidental rather than important.

Minor points not to be made prominent.

Two other parables of our Lord illustrate the casting off of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. They are the marriage of the King's Son (Matt. xxii, 2–14), and the great supper (Luke xiv, 16–24). The former is recorded only by Matthew, and follows immediately after that of the wicked husbandmen. The latter is recorded only by Luke. Some of the rationalistic critics have argued that these are but different versions of the same discourse, but a careful analysis will show that, while they have marked analogies, they have also numerous points of difference. And it is an aid to the interpretation of such analogous parables to study them together and mark their diverging lines of thought. The parable of the marriage of the King's Son, as compared with that of the wicked husbandmen, exhibits an advance in thought as notable as that observed in the parable of the tares as compared with that of the sower. Trench here observes "how the Lord is revealing himself in ever clearer light as the central person of the kingdom, giving here a far plainer hint than there of the nobility of his descent. There he was indeed the son, the only and beloved one, of the householder; but here his race is royal, and he appears himself at once as the King and the King's Son (Psa. lxxii, 1). This appearance of the householder as the King announces that the sphere in which this parable moves is the New Testament dispensation—is the kingdom which was announced before, but was only actually present with the coming of the King. The last was a parable of the Old Testament history; even Christ himself appears there rather as

Comparison of analogous parables.

Parable of Marriage of King's Son and Wicked Husbandmen compared.

the last and greatest of the line of its prophets and teachers than as the founder of a new kingdom. In that, a parable of the law, God appears demanding something from men; in this, a parable of grace, God appears more as giving something to them. There he is displeased that his demands are not complied with, here that his goodness is not accepted; there he requires, here he imparts. And thus, as we so often find, the two mutually complete one another; this taking up the matter where the other left it."[1] The great purpose in both parables was to make conspicuous the shameful character and conduct of those who were under great obligation to show all possible respect and loyalty. The conduct of the husbandmen was atrocious in the extreme; but it may be said that a claim of rent was demanded of them, and there was some supposable motive to treat the messengers of the owner of the vineyard with disrespect. Not so, however, with those bidden to the royal marriage feast. That guests, honoured by an invitation from the king to attend the marriage of his son, should have treated such invitation with wilful refusal and contempt, and even have gone to the extreme of abusing the royal servants who came to bid them to the marriage, and of putting some to death, seems hardly conceivable. But this very feature which seems so improbable in itself is a prominent part of the parable, and designed to set in the most odious light the conduct of those chief priests and Pharisees who were treating the Son of God with open contempt, and would fain have put him to death. Such ingratitude and disloyalty deserved no less a punishment than the sending forth of armies to destroy the murderers and to burn their city (verse 7).

Parables of Marriage of King's Son and Great Supper compared.

When now we compare the parable of the marriage of the king's son with that of the great supper (Luke xiv, 16) we find they both agree (1) in having a festival as the basis of their imagery, (2) in that invitations were sent to persons already bidden, (3) in the disrespect shown by those bidden, and (4) the calling in of the poor and neglected from the streets and highways. But they differ in the following particulars: The parable of the great supper was spoken at an earlier period of our Lord's ministry, when the opposition of chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees was as yet not violent. It was uttered in the house of a Pharisee whither he had been invited to eat bread (verses 1, 12), and where there appeared in his presence a dropsical man, whose malady he healed. Thereupon he addressed a parable to those who were bidden, counselling them not to recline on the chief seat at table unless invited there (verses 7–11). He

[1] Notes on the Parables, p. 180.

also uttered a proverbial injunction to the Pharisee who had invited him to make a feast for the poor and the maimed rather than kinsmen and rich friends (verses 12-14); and then he added the parable of the great supper. But the parable of the marriage of the king's son was uttered at a later period, and in the temple, when no Pharisee would have invited him to his table, and when the hatred of chief priests and scribes had become so bitter that it gave occasion for ominous and fearful words, such as that parable contained. We note further that, in the earlier parable, the occasion was a great supper (*δεῖπνον*), in the latter a wedding (*γάμος*). In the one, the person making the feast is simply "a certain man" (Luke xiv, 16), in the other he is a king. In the one the guests all make excuse, in the other they treat the royal invitation with contempt and violence. In the one those who were bidden are simply denounced with the statement that none of them shall taste of the supper; in the other the king's armies are sent forth to destroy the murderers of his servants and to burn their city. In the earlier parable there are two sendings forth to call in guests, first from the streets and lanes of the city, and next from the highways and hedges—intimating first the going unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. x, 6; xv, 24), and afterward to the Gentiles (Acts xiii, 46); in the latter only one outgoing call is indicated, and that one subsequent to the destruction of the murderers and their city. In that later prophetic moment Jesus contemplated the ingathering of the Gentiles. Then to the later parable is added the incident of the guest who appeared without the wedding garment (Matt. xxii, 11-14), which Strauss characteristically conjectures to be the fragment of another parable which Matthew by mistake attached to this, because of its referring to a feast.[1] But with a purer and profounder insight Trench sees in these few added words "a wonderful example of the love and wisdom which marked the teaching of our Lord. For how fitting was it in a discourse which set forth how sinners of every degree were invited to a fellowship in the blessings of the Gospel, that they should be reminded likewise, that for the lasting enjoyment of these, they must put off their former conversation—a most needful caution, lest any should abuse the grace of God, and forget that while as regarded the past they were freely called, they were yet now called unto holiness."[2]

The parable of the barren fig-tree (Luke xiii, 6-9) had its special application in the cutting off of Israel, but it is not necessarily limited to that one event. It has lessons of universal application, illustrating the forbearance and longsuffering

The barren Fig-tree.

[1] Life of Jesus, § 78.

[2] Notes on the Parables, pp. 179, 180.

of God, as also the certainty of destructive judgment upon every one who not only produces no good fruit, but "also cumbers the ground" (*καὶ τὴν γῆν καταργεῖ*). Its historical occasion appears from the preceding context, (verses 1–5), but the logical connexion is not so apparent. It is to be traced, however, to the character of those informants who told him of Pilate's outrage on the Galileans. For the twice-repeated warning, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish" (verses 3 and 5), implies that the persons addressed were sinners deserving fearful penalty. They were probably from Jerusalem, and representatives of the Pharisaic party who had little respect for the Galileans, and perhaps intended their tidings to be a sort of gibe against Jesus and his Galilean followers.

Old Testament parables.

The means for understanding the occasion and import of Nathan's parable (2 Sam. xii, 1–4) are abundantly furnished in the context. The same is true of the parable of the wise woman of Tekoah (2 Sam. xiv, 4–7), and that of the wounded prophet in 1 Kings xx, 38–40. The narrative, in Eccles. ix, 14, 15, of the little city besieged by a great king, but delivered by the wisdom of a poor wise man, has been regarded by some as an actual history. Those who date the Book of Ecclesiastes under the Persian domination think that allusion is made to the delivery of Athens by Themistocles, when that city was besieged by Xerxes, the great king of Persia. Others have suggested the deliverance of Potidæa (Herod., viii, 128), or Tripolis (Diodor., xvi, 41). Hitzig even refers it to the little seaport Dora besieged by Antiochus the Great (Polybius, v, 66). But in none of these last three cases is it known that the deliverance was effected by a poor wise man; and as for Athens, it could hardly have been called a little city, with few men in it, nor could the brilliant leader of the Greeks be properly called "a poor wise man." It is far better to take the narrative as a parable, which may or may not have had its basis in some real incident of the kind, but which was designed to illustrate the great value of wisdom. The author makes his own application in verse 16: "Then said I, Better is wisdom than strength; yet the wisdom of the poor is despised, and his words—none of them are heard." That is, such is the general rule. A case of exceptional extremity, like the siege referred to, may for a moment exhibit the value of wisdom, and its superiority over strength and weapons of war; but the lesson is soon forgotten, and the masses of men give no heed to the words of the poor, whatever their wisdom and worth. The two verses that follow (17 and 18) are an additional comment upon the lesson taught in the parable, and put its real meaning beyond all reasonable doubt. But it is a misuse of the parable, and a

pressing of its import beyond legitimate bounds, to say, with Hengstenberg: "The poor man with his delivering wisdom is an image of Israel. . . . Israel would have proved a salt to the heathen world if ear had only been given to the voice of wisdom dwelling in his midst."[1] Still more unsound is the spiritualizing process by which the besieged city is made to represent "the life of the individual: the great king who lays siege to it is death and the judgment of the Lord."[2]

All Jesus' parables in the Synoptic Gospels.

All the parables of our Lord are contained in the first three Gospels. Those of the door, the good shepherd, and the vine, recorded by John, are not parables proper, but allegories. In most instances we find in the immediate context a clue to the correct interpretation. Thus the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matt. xviii, 23–34) has its occasion stated in verses 21 and 22, and its application in verse 35. The parable of the rich man who planned to pull down his barns and build greater in order to treasure up all the increase of his fields (Luke xii, 16–20), is readily seen from the context to have been uttered as a warning against covetousness. The parable of the importunate friend at midnight (Luke xi, 5–8) is but a part of a discourse on prayer. The parables of the unjust judge and the importunate widow, and of the Pharisee and the publican at prayer (Luke xviii, 1–14), have their purpose stated by the evangelist who records them. The parable of the good Samaritan (Luke x, 30–37) was called forth by the question of the lawyer, who desired to justify himself, and asked, "Who is my neighbour?"

Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard.

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matt. xx, 1–16), although its occasion and application are given in the context, has been regarded as difficult of interpretation. It was occasioned by the mercenary spirit of Peter's question (in chap. xix, 27), "What then shall we have?" and its principal aim is evidently to rebuke and condemn that spirit. But the difficulties of interpreters have arisen chiefly from giving undue prominence to the minor points of the parable, as the penny a day, and the different hours at which the labourers were hired. Stier insists that the penny (*δηνάριον*), or day's wages (*μισθός*), is the principal question and main feature of the parable. Others make the several hours mentioned represent different periods of life at which men are called into the kingdom of God, as childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. Others have supposed that the Jews were denoted by those first hired, and the Gentiles by those who were

[1] Commentary on Ecclesiastes, in loco.

[2] Wangemann, as quoted by Delitzsch, in loco.

called last. Origen held that the different hours represented the different epochs of human history, as the time before the flood, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ, etc. But all this tends to divert the mind from the great thought in the purpose of the parable, namely, to condemn the mercenary spirit, and indicate that the rewards of heaven are matters of grace and not of debt. And we should make very emphatic the observation of Bengel, that the parable is not so much a prediction as a warning.[1] The fundamental fallacy of those exegetes who make the penny the most prominent point, is their tacit assumption that the narrative of the parable is designed to portray a murmuring and fault finding which will actually take place at the last day. Unless we assume this, according to Stier, "no reality would correspond with the principal point of the figurative narration."[2] Accordingly, the *ὕπαγε, go thy way* (verse 14), is understood, like the *πορεύεσθε, depart* (of Matt. xxv, 41), as an angry rejection and banishment from God; and the *ἆρον τὸ σόν, take thine own*, "can mean nothing else than what, at another stage, Abraham says to the rich man (Luke xvi, 25): What thou hast contracted for, with that thou art discharged; but now, away from my service and from all further intercourse with me!"[3] So also Luther says that "the murmuring labourers go away with their penny and are damned." But the word *ὑπάγω* has been already twice used in this parable (verses 4 and 7) in the sense of going away into the vineyard to work, and it seems altogether too violent a change to put on it here the sense of going into damnation. Still less supposable is such a sense of the word when addressed to those who had filled an honourable contract, laboured faithfully in the vineyard, and "borne the burden of the day and the burning heat" (verse 12).

Mistakes of interpreters.

Let us now carefully apply the three principles of interpretation enunciated above[4] to the exposition of this intricate parable. First, the historical occasion and scope. Jesus had said to the young man who had great possessions: "If thou wouldst be perfect, go (*ὕπαγε*), sell thy possessions and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Matt. xix, 21). The young man went away sorrowful, for he had many goods (*κτήματα πολλά*), and Jesus thereupon spoke of the difficulty of a rich man entering into the kingdom of heaven (verses 23–26). "Then answered Peter and said to him, Lo, we forsook all things and followed thee: what then shall we have?" *Τί ἄρα ἔσται ἡμῖν; what then shall be to us?*—that is, in the way of compensation and

Occasion and scope.

[1] Non est praedictio sed admonitia. Gnomon, in loco.

[2] Words of the Lord Jesus, in loco. [3] Ibid. [4] See above, pp. 193, 194.

reward. What shall be our *θησαυρὸς ἐν οὐρανοῖς, treasure in heaven?* This question, not reprehensible in itself, breathed a bad spirit of overweening confidence and self-esteem, by its evident comparison with the young man: We have done all that you demand of him; we forsook our all; what treasure shall be ours in heaven? Jesus did not at once rebuke what was bad in the question, but, first, graciously responded to what was good in it. These disciples, who did truly leave all and follow him, shall not go without blissful reward. "Verily, I say unto you that ye, who followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This was, virtually, making to them a promise and pledge of what they should have in the future, but he adds: "And every one who forsook houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive manifold more,[1] and shall inherit life eternal." Here is a common inheritance and blessing promised to all who meet the conditions named. But in addition to this great reward, which is common alike to all, there will be distinctions and differences; and so it is immediately added: "But many first will be last and last first." And from this last statement the parable immediately proceeds: "For (*γάρ*) the kingdom of heaven is like," etc. This connexion Stier recognizes: "Because Peter has inquired after reward and compensation, Christ says, first of all, what is contained in verses 28, 29; but because he has asked with a culpable eagerness for reward, the parable concerning the first and the last follows with its earnest warning and rebuke."[2] But to say, in the face of such a connexion and context, that the reward contemplated in the penny has no reference to eternal life, but is to be understood solely of temporal good which may lead to damnation, is virtually to ignore and defy the context, and bring in a strange and foreign thought. The scope of the parable is no doubt to admonish Peter and the rest against the mercenary spirit and self-conceit apparent in his question, but it concludes, as Meyer observes, "and that very appropriately, with language which no doubt allows the apostles to contemplate the prospect of receiving rewards of a peculiarly distinguished character (xix, 28), but does not warrant the absolute certainty of it, nor does it recognize the existence of any thing like so-called valid claims."[3]

[1] *Πολλαπλασίονα* is the reading of two most ancient codices, B and L, a number of versions, as Syriac and Sahidic, and is adopted by Lachmann, Alford, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort. Comp. Luke xviii, 30.

[2] Words of the Lord Jesus, in loco. [3] Commentary on Matt. xx, 16.

Having ascertained the historical occasion and scope, the next step is to analyze the subject matter, and note what appears to have special prominence. It will hardly be disputed that the particular agreement of the householder with the labourers hired early in the morning is one point too prominent to be ignored in the exposition. Noticeable also is the fact that the second class (hired at the third hour) go to work without any special bargain, and rely on the word "whatsoever is right I will give you." So also with those called at the sixth and ninth hours. But those called at the eleventh hour received (according to the true text of verse 7) no special promise at all, and nothing is said to them about reward. They had been waiting and seem to have been anxious for a call to work, and were idle because no one had hired them, but as soon as an order came they went off to their labour, not stopping so much as to speak or hear about wages. In all this it does not appear that the different hours have any special significance; but we are rather to note the *spirit and disposition* of the different labourers, particularly the first and the last hired. In the account of the settlement at the close of the day, only these last and the first are mentioned with any degree of prominence. The last are the first rewarded, and with such marks of favour that the self-conceit and mercenary spirit of those who, in the early morning, had made a special bargain for a penny a day, are shown in words of fault finding, and elicit the rebuke of the householder and the declaration of his absolute right to do what he will with his own.

Prominent points in the parables.

If now we interpret these several parts with strict reference to the occasion and scope of the parable, we must think of the apostles as those for whom its admonition was first of all intended. What was wrong in the spirit of Peter's question called for timely rebuke and admonition. Jesus gives him and the others assurance that no man who becomes his disciple shall fail of glorious reward; and, somewhat after the style of the agreement with the labourers first hired, he bargains with the twelve, and agrees that every one of them shall have a throne. But, he adds (for such is the simplest application of the proverb, "Many first shall be last," etc.): Do not imagine, in vain self-conceit, that, because you were the first to leave all and follow me, you therefore must needs be honoured more than others who may hereafter enter my service. That is not the noblest spirit which asks, *What shall I have?* It is better to ask, *What shall I do?* He who follows Christ, and makes all manner of sacrifices for his sake, confident that it will be well, is nobler than he who

The parable primarily an admonition for the disciples.

lingers to make a bargain. Nay, he who goes into the Lord's vineyard asking no questions, and not even waiting to talk about the wages, is nobler and better still. His spirit and labour, though it continue but as an hour, may have qualities so beautiful and rare as to lead Him, whose heavenly rewards are gifts of grace, and not payments of debts, to place him on a more conspicuous throne than that which any one of the apostles may attain. The murmuring, and the response which it draws from the householder, are not to be taken as a prophecy of what may be expected to take place at the final judgment, but rather as a suggestive hint and warning for Peter and the rest to examine the spirit in which they followed Jesus.

If this be the real import of the parable, how misleading are those expositions which would make the penny a day the most prominent point. How unnecessary and irrelevant to regard the words of the householder (in verses 13–16) as equivalent to the final sentence of damnation, or to attach special significance to the standing idle. How unimportant the different hours at which the labourers were hired, or the question whether the householder be God or Christ. The interpretation which aims to maintain the unity of the whole narrative, and make prominent the great central truth, will see in this parable a tender admonition and a suggestive warning against the wrong spirit evinced in Peter's words.[1]

Parable of the Unjust Steward.

The parable of the unjust steward (Luke xvi, 1–13) has been regarded, as above all others, a *crux interpretum*. It appears to have no such historical or logical connexion with what precedes as will serve in any material way to help in its interpretation. It follows immediately after the three parables of the lost sheep, the lost drachma, and the prodigal son, which were addressed to the Pharisees and the scribes who murmured because Jesus received sinners and ate with them (chap. xv, 2). Having uttered those parables for their special benefit, he spoke one "also to the disciples" (*καὶ πρὸς τοὺς μαθητάς*, xvi, 1). These disciples are probably to be understood of that wider circle which included others besides the twelve (compare Luke x, 1), and among them were doubtless many publicans like Matthew and Zacchæus, who needed the special lesson here enjoined. That lesson is now quite generally acknowledged to be a *wise and prudent use of this world's goods*. For the sagacity, shrewd foresight, and care to

[1] The words, "For many are called, but few chosen," which appear in some ancient codices (C, D, N), at the close of verse 16, are wanting in the oldest and best manuscripts (ℵ, B, L, Z), and are rejected by the best textual critics (Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort). We have, therefore, taken no notice of them above.

shift for himself, which the steward evinced in his hasty action with his lord's debtors (*φρονίμως ἐποίησεν*, ver. 8), are emphatically the *tertium comparationis*, and are said to have been applauded (*ἐπήνεσεν*) even by his master.

Unauthorized additions to the parable.

The parable first of all demands that we apprehend correctly the literal import of its narrative, and avoid the reading or imagining in it any thing that is not really there. Thus, for example, it is said the steward was accused of wasting the rich man's goods, and it is nowhere intimated that this accusation was a slander. We have, therefore, no right (as Köster) to assume that it was. Neither is there any warrant for saying (as Van Oosterzee and others) that the steward had been guilty of exacting excessive and exorbitant claims of his lord's debtors, remitting only what was equitable to his lord, and wasting the rest on himself; and that his haste to have them write down their bills to a lower amount was simply, on his part, an act of justice toward them and an effort to repair his former wrongs. If such had been the fact he would not have wasted his lord's goods (*τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ*), but those of the debtors. Nor is there any ground to assume that the steward made restitution from his own funds (Brauns), or, that his lord, after commending his prudence, retained him in his service (Baumgarten-Crusius). All this is putting into the narrative of our Lord what he did not see fit to put there.

Jesus' own application.

We are to notice, further, that Jesus himself applies the parable to the disciples by his words of counsel and exhortation in verse 9, and makes additional comments on it in verses 10–13. These comments of the author of the parable are to be carefully studied as containing the best clue to his meaning. The main lesson is given in verse 9, where the disciples are urged to imitate the prudence and wisdom of the unjust steward in making to themselves friends out of unrighteous mammon (*ἐκ τοῦ, κ. τ. λ.*, *from* the resources and opportunities afforded by the wealth, or the worldly goods, in their control). The steward exhibited in his shrewd plan the quick sagacity of a child of the world, and knew well how to ingratiate himself with the men of his own kind and generation. In this respect it is said the children of this age are wiser than the children of the light;[1] therefore, our Lord would say,

[1] The latter part of verse 8 is, literally, "Because the sons of this age are wiser than the sons of the light in reference to their own generation." Not *in their generation*, as Authorized Version, but *εἰς τὴν γενεὰν τὴν ἑαυτῶν*, *for their generation*, *as regards*, or *in relation to*, their own generation. "The whole body of the children of the world —a category of like-minded men—is described as a *generation*, a clan of connexions, and how appropriately, since they appear precisely as *vioí*, *sons*."—Meyer. "The ready accomplices in the steward's fraud showed themselves to be men of the same

emulate and imitate them in this particular. Similarly, on another occasion, he had enjoined upon his disciples, when they were sent forth into the hostile world, to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (Matt. x, 16).

So far all is tolerably clear and certain, but when we inquire Who is the rich man (in verse 1), and who are the friends who receive into the eternal tabernacles (verse 9), we find great diversity of opinion among the best interpreters. Usually the rich man has been understood of God, as the possessor of all things, who uses us as his stewards of whatever goods are entrusted to our care. Olshausen, on the other hand, takes the rich man to be the devil, considered as the prince of this world. Meyer explains the rich man as Mammon, and urges that verses 9 and 13 especially require this view. It will be seen that the adoption of either one of these views will materially effect our exegesis of the whole parable. Here, then, especially, we need to make a most careful use of the second and third hermeneutical rules afore mentioned, and observe the nature and properties of the things employed as imagery, and interpret them with strict reference to the great central thought and to the general scope and design of the whole. Our choice would seem to lie between the common view and that of Meyer; for Olshausen's explanation, so far as it differs essentially from Meyer's, has nothing in the text to make it even plausible; and the other views (as of Schleiermacher, who makes the rich man represent the Romans, and Grossmann, who understands the Roman emperor) have still less in their favour. The common exposition, which takes the rich man to be God, may be accepted and maintained without serious difficulty. The details of the parable are then to be explained as incidental, designed merely to exhibit the shrewdness of the unjust steward, and no other analogies are to be pressed. The disciples are urged to be discreet and faithful to God in their use of the unrighteous mammon, and thereby secure the friendship of God, Christ, angels, and their fellow men,[1] who may

generation as he was—they were all of one race, children of the ungodly world."—Trench. There is no sufficient reason to supply the thought, or refer the phrase, *their own generation*, to the *sons of light* (as De Wette, Olshausen, Trench, and many). If that were the thought another construction could easily have been adopted to express it clearly. As it stands, it means that the children of light do not, in general, in relation to themselves or others, evince the prudence and sagacity which the children of the world know so well how to use in their relations to their own race of worldlings.

[1] Some, however, who adopt this exposition in general, will not allow that God or the angels are to be understood by the *friends*, inasmuch as such reference would not accord strictly with the analogy of the parable.

all be thereby disposed to receive them, when the goods of this world fail, into the eternal habitations.

The rich man to be understood as Mammon.

But the interpretation which makes the rich man to be Mammon, gives a special point and force to several noticeable remarks of Jesus, maintains a self-consistency within itself, and also enforces the same great central thought as truly as the other exposition. It contemplates the disciples as about to be put out of the stewardship of Mammon, and admonishes them to consider how the world loves its own, and knows how to calculate and plan wisely (*φρονίμως*) for personal and selfish ends. Such shrewdness as that displayed by the unjust steward calls forth the applause of even Mammon himself, who is defrauded by the act. But, Jesus says, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Ye must, in the nature of things, be unfaithful to the one or the other. If ye are true and faithful to the unrighteous lord Mammon, ye cannot be sons of the light and friends of God. If, on the other hand, ye are unfaithful to Mammon, he and all his adherents will accuse you, and ye will be put out of his service. What will ye do? If ye would secure a place in the kingdom of God, if ye would make friends now, while the goods of unrighteous Mammon are at your control—friends to receive and welcome you to the eternal dwellings of light—ye must imitate the prudent foresight of the unjust steward, and be unfaithful to Mammon in order to be faithful servants of God.[1]

Geikie's comment.

The scope and purport of the parable, as evidenced by the comments of Jesus (in verses 9–13), is thus set forth by Geikie: "By becoming my disciples you have identified yourselves with the interest of another master than Mammon, the god of this world—whom you have hitherto served—and have before you another course and aim in life. You will be represented to your former master as no longer faithful to him, for my service is so utterly opposed to that of Mammon, that, if faithful to me, you cannot be faithful to him, and he will, in consequence, assuredly take your stewardship of this world's goods away from you—that is, sink you in poverty, as I have often said. I counsel you, therefore, so to use the goods of Mammon—the wordly means still at your command—that by a truly worthy distribution of them to

[1] Meyer remarks: "This circumstance, that Jesus sets before his disciples the prudence of a *dishonest* proceeding as an example, would not have been the occasion of such unspeakable misrepresentations and such unrighteous judgments if the principle, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*, (verse 13), had been kept in view, and it had been considered accordingly that even the disciples, in fact, by beneficent application of their property, must have acted unfaithfully toward Mammon in order to be faithful toward their contrasted master, toward God."—Commentary, in loco.

your needy brethren—and my disciples are mostly poor—you may make friends for yourselves, who, if they die before you, will welcome you to everlasting habitations in heaven, when you pass thither, at death. Fit yourselves, by labours of love and deeds of true charity, as my followers, to become fellow citizens of the heavenly mansions with those whose wants you have relieved while they were still in life. If you be faithful thus, in the use of your possessions on earth, you will be deemed worthy by God to be entrusted with infinitely greater riches hereafter. . . . Be assured that if you do not use your earthly riches faithfully for God, by dispensing them as I have told you, you will never enter my heavenly kingdom at all. You will have shown that you are servants of Mammon, and not the servants of God; for it is impossible for any man to serve two masters." [1]

There is a deep inner connexion between the parable of the unjust steward and that of the rich man and Lazarus, narrated in the same chapter (Luke xvi, 19–31). A wise faithfulness toward God in the use of the mammon of unrighteousness will make friends to receive us into eternal mansions. But he who allows himself, like the rich man, to become the pampered, luxury-loving man of the world—so true and faithful to the interests of Mammon that he himself becomes an impersonation and representative of the god of riches—will in the world to come lift up his eyes in torments, and learn there, too late, how he might have made the angels and Abraham and Lazarus friends to receive him to the banquets of the paradise of God.

It is interesting and profitable to study the relation of the parables to each other, where there is a manifest logical connexion. This we noticed in the seven parables recorded in Matt. xiii. It is more conspicuous in Luke xv, where the joy over the recovery of that which was lost is enhanced by the climax: (1) a lost sheep, and one of a hundred; (2) a lost drachma, and one out of ten; (3) a lost child, and one out of two. The parables of the ten virgins and the talents in Matt. xxv, enjoin, (1) the duty of *watching* for the coming of the Lord, and (2) the duty of *working* for him in his absence. But we have not space to trace the details. The principles and methods of interpreting parables, as illustrated in the foregoing pages, will be found sufficient guides to the interpretation of all the scriptural parables.

[1] Geikie, Life of Christ, chap. liii.

CHAPTER VII.

INTERPRETATION OF ALLEGORIES.

Allegory to be distinguished from Parable.

An allegory is usually defined as an extended metaphor. It bears the same relation to the parable which the metaphor does to the simile. In a parable there is either some formal comparison introduced, as "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed," or else the imagery is so presented as to be kept distinct from the thing signified, and to require an explanation outside of itself, as in the case of the parable of the sower (Matt. xiii, 3, ff.). The allegory contains its interpretation within itself, and the thing signified is identified with the image; as "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman" (John xv, 1); "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. v, 13). The allegory is a figurative use and application of some supposable fact or history, whereas the parable is itself such a supposable fact or history. The parable uses words in their literal sense, and its narrative never transgresses the limits of what might have been actual fact. The allegory is continually using words in a metaphorical sense, and its narrative, however supposable in itself, is manifestly fictitious. Hence the meaning of the name, from the Greek *ἄλλος*, *other*, and *ἀγορεύω*, to *speak*, to *proclaim;* that is, to say another thing from that which is meant, or, so to speak, that another sense is expressed than that which the words convey. It is a discourse in which the main subject is represented by some other subject to which it has a resemblance.[1]

Allegory is a continued Metaphor.

Some have objected to calling an allegory a continued metaphor.[2] Who shall say, they ask, where the one ends and the other begins? But the very definition should answer this question. When the metaphor is confined to a single word or sentence it is improper to call it an allegory; just as it is improper to call a proverb a parable, although many a proverb is a condensed parable, and is sometimes loosely called so in the Scriptures (Matt. xv, 14, 15). But when it is extended into a

[1] "The allegory," says Cremer, "is a mode of exposition which does not, like the parable, hide and clothe the sense in order to give a clear idea of it; on the contrary, it clothes the sense in order to hide it."—Biblico-Theol. Lex. N. Test., p. 96.

[2] See Davidson's Hermeneutics, p. 306, and Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, p. 338.

narrative, and its imagery is drawn out in many details and analogies, yet so as to accord with the one leading figure, it would be improper to call it a metaphor. It is also affirmed by Davidson that in a metaphor there is only one meaning, while the allegory has two meanings, a literal and a figurative.[1] It will be seen, however, on careful examination, that this statement is misleading. Except in the case of the mystic allegory of Gal. iv, 21–31, it will be found that the allegory, like the metaphor, has but one meaning. Take for example the following from Psalm lxxx, 8–15:

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast torn away;
Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it;
9 Thou didst clear away before it,
And it rooted its roots,
And it filled the land.
10 Covered were the mountains with its shade,
And its branches are cedars of God.
11 It sent out its boughs unto the sea,
And unto the river its tender shoots.
12 Wherefore hast thou broken down its walls,
And have plucked it all that pass over the road?
13 Swine from the forest are laying it waste,
And creatures of the field are feeding on it.
14 O God of hosts, return now,
Look from heaven, and behold,
And visit this vine;
15 And protect what thy right hand has planted,
And upon the son thou madest strong for thyself.

Surely no one would understand this allegory in a literal sense. No one supposes for a moment that God literally took a vine out of Egypt, or that it had an actual growth elsewhere as here described. The language throughout is metaphorical, but being thus continued under one leading figure of a vine, the whole passage becomes an allegory. The casting out of the heathen (verse 8) is a momentary departure from the figure, but it serves as a clue to the meaning of all the rest, and after verse 15 the writer leaves the figure entirely, but makes it clear that he identifies himself and Israel with the

[1] Hermeneutics, p. 306. This writer also says: "The metaphor always asserts or imagines that one object is another. Thus, 'Judah is a lion's whelp' (Gen. xlix, 9); 'I am the vine' (John xv, 1). On the contrary, allegory never affirms that one thing is another, which is in truth an absurdity." But the very passage he quotes from John xv, 1, as a metaphor, is also part of an allegory, which is continued through six verses, showing that allegory as well as metaphor may affirm that one thing is another. The literal meaning of the word *allegory*, as shown above, is the affirming one thing for another.

vine. The same imagery is given in the form of a parable in Isa. v, 1–6, and the distinction between the two is seen in this, that the meaning of the parable is given separately at the close (verse 7), but the meaning of the allegory is implied in the metaphorical use of its words.

Having carefully distinguished between the parable and the allegory, and shown that the allegory is essentially an extended metaphor, we need no separate and special rules for the interpretation of the allegorical portions of the Scriptures. The same general principles that apply to the interpretation of metaphors and parables will apply to allegories. The great error to be guarded against is the effort to find minute analogies and hidden meanings in all the details of the imagery. Hence, as in the case of parables, we should first determine the main thought intended by the figure, and then interpret the minor points with constant reference to it. The context, the occasion, the circumstances, the application, and often the accompanying explanation, are, in each case, such as to leave little doubt of the import of any of the allegories of the Bible.

Same hermeneutical principles apply to Allegory as to Parable.

The allegory of old age, in Eccles. xii, 3–7, under the figure of a house about to fall in ruins, has been variously interpreted. Some of the fathers (Gregory Thaumaturgus, Cyril of Jerusalem) understood the whole passage as referring to the day of judgment as connected with the end of the world. Accordingly, "the day" of verse 3 would be "the great and terrible day of the Lord" (Joel ii, 31 ; comp. Matt. xxiv, 29). Other expositors (Umbreit, Elster, Ginsburg) regard the passage as describing the approach of death under the figure of a fearful tempest which strikes the inmates of a noble mansion with consternation and terror. Wright explains the imagery of verses 1–5 as derived from the closing days of a Palestinean winter, which occur at the end of February, and are always dangerous and quite often fatal to the old and infirm. They betake them to their sick chambers, feel all sorts of terrors, and when the almond tree blossoms without, and the locusts crawl out of their holes, they see no springtime for themselves, but an almost certain departure to their long home. According to all these explanations the passage must be understood metaphorically and not as an allegory. Wright's exegesis makes most of the allusions mere references to facts supposed to be common and well known during the seven days of evil.[1] But the great majority of expositors, ancient and modern, have understood the passage as an allegorical description of old age. And this

Allegory of old age in Eccles. xii, 3–7.

[1] The Book of Koheleth, pp. 270–275, London, 1883.

view, we may safely say, is favoured and even required by the immediate context and by the imagery itself. But we lose much of its point and force by understanding it of old age generally. It is not a truthful portraiture of the peaceful, serene, honoured, and "good old age" so much extolled in the Old Testament. It is not the picture presented to the mind in Prov. xvi, 31: "A crown of glory is the hoary head; in the way of righteousness will it be found;" nor that of Psa. xcii, 12–14, where it is declared that the righteous shall flourish like the palm, and grow great like the Lebanon cedars; "they shall still bear fruit in hoary age; fresh and green shall they be." Comp. also Isa. xl, 30, 31. It remains for us, then, with Tayler Lewis, to understand that "the picture here given is the old age of the sensualist. This appears, too, from the connexion. It is the 'evil time,' the 'day of darkness' that has come upon the youth who was warned in the language above, made so much more impressive by its tone of forcasting irony. It is the dreary old age of the young man who *would* 'go on in every way of his heart and after every sight of his eyes,' who did not 'keep remorse from his soul nor evils from his flesh,' and now all these things are come upon him, with no such alleviations as often accompany the decline of life.[1]" It is the old age of the sensualist.

Passing now to the particular figures used, we should exercise the greatest caution and care, for some of the allusions seem to be quite enigmatical. Barely to name the different interpretations of the several parts of this allegory would require many pages.[2] But the most judicious and careful interpreters are agreed that the "keepers of the house" (verse 3) are the arms and hands, which serve for protection and defence, but in decrepit age become feeble and tremulous. The "strong men" are the legs, which, when they lose their muscular vigour, become bowed and crooked in supporting their wearisome load. "The grinders," or rather *grinding maids* (טוֹחֲנוֹת fem. plural in allusion to the fact that grinding with hand mills was usually performed by women), are the teeth, which in age become few and cease to perform their work. "Those that behold in the windows" are the eyes, which become dim with years. Beyond this point the interpretations become much more various and subtle. "The doors into the street" (verse 4) are generally explained of the mouth, the two lips of which are conceived of as double doors (Heb. דְּלָתַיִם), or a door consisting of two sides or leaves. But it would seem better to understand these double doors of the two ears, which become Doubtful allusions.

[1] American edition of Lange's Commentary on Ecclesiastes, pp. 152, 153.

[2] See Poole's Synopsis, in loco.

shut up or closed to outer sounds. So Hengstenberg explains it, and is followed by Tayler Lewis, who observes: "The old sensualist, who had lived so much *abroad* and so little at home, is shut in at last. With no propriety could the mouth be called the *street door*, through which the master of the house goes abroad. . . . It is rather the door to the interior, the cellar door, that leads down to the stored or consumed provision, the stomach." [1] The "sound of the grinding" is by many referred to the noise of the teeth in masticating food; but this would be a return to what has been sufficiently noticed in verse 3. Better to understand this sound of the mill as equivalent to "the most familiar household sounds," as the sound of the mill really was. The thought then connects naturally with what precedes and follows; the ears are so shut up, the hearing has become so dull, that the most familiar sounds are but faintly heard,[2] "and," he adds, "it rises to the sound of the sparrow;" that is, as most recent critics explain, the "sound of the grinding" rises to that of a sparrow's shrill cry, and yet this old man's organs of hearing are so dull that he scarcely hears it. Others explain this last clause of the wakefulness of the old man: "he rises up at the voice of the sparrow." Thus rendered, we need not, as many, understand it of rising or waking up early in the morning (in which case the Hebrew word עוּר rather than קוּם should have been used), but of restlessness. Though dull of hearing, he will, nevertheless, at times start and rise up at the sound of a sparrow's shrill note. "The daughters of song" may be understood of the women singers (chap. ii, 8) who once ministered to his hilarity, but whose songs can now no longer charm him, and they are therefore humbled. But it is, perhaps, better to understand the voice itself, the various tones of which become low and feeble (comp. the use of שָׁחָה in Isa. xxix, 4).

The allegory blends its meaning with its imagery.

As we pass to verse 5 we note the peculiar nature of allegory to interweave its interpretation with its imagery. The figure of a house is for the time abandoned, and we read: "Also from a height they are afraid, and terrors are in the way, and the almond disgusts, and the locust becomes heavy, and the caperberry fails to produce effect; for going is the

[1] Lange's Commentary on Ecclesiastes (Am. ed.), p. 155.

[2] There was hardly any part of the day or night when this work was not going on with its ceaseless noise. It was, indeed, a sign that the senses were failing in their office when this familiar, yet very peculiar, sound of the grinding had ceased to arrest the attention, or had become low and obscure—

> When the hum of the mill is faintly heard,
> And the daughters of song are still.—Ibid., p. 156.

man to his everlasting house, and round about in the street pass the mourners." That is, looking down from that which is high, the tottering old man quickly becomes dizzy and is afraid; terrors seem to be continually in his path (comp. Prov. xxii, 13; xxvi, 13); the almond is no longer pleasant to his taste, but, on the contrary, disgusts;[1] and the locust, once with him perhaps a dainty article of food (Lev. xi, 22; Matt. iii, 4; Mark i, 6), becomes heavy and nauseating in his stomach, and the caperberry no longer serves its purpose of stimulating appetite.

In verse 6 we meet again with other figures which have a natural association with the lordly mansion. The end of life is represented as a removing (רחק) or sundering of the silver cord and a breaking of the golden lampbowl. The idea is that of a golden lamp suspended by a silver cord in the palatial hall, and suddenly the bowl of the lamp is dashed to pieces by the breaking of the cord. The pitcher at the fountain and the wheel at the cistern are similar metaphors referring to the abundant machinery for drawing water which would be connected with the mansion of a sumptuous Dives. These at last give out, and the whole furniture and machinery of life fall into sudden ruin. The explaining of the silver cord as the spinal marrow, and the golden bowl as the brain, and the fountain and cistern as the right and left ventricles of the heart, seems too far fetched to be safe or satisfactory. Such minute and ramified explanations of particular figures are always likely to be overdone, and generally confuse rather than illustrate the main idea which the author had in mind. The words of verse 7 show that the metaphors of verse 6 refer to the utter breaking down of the functions and processes of life. The pampered old body falls a pitiable ruin, in view of which Koheleth repeats his cry of "vanity of vanities."

In the interpretation of an allegory so rich in suggestions as the above, the great hermeneutical principles to be carefully adhered to are, first, to grasp the one great idea of the whole passage, and, second, to avoid the

Hermeneutical principles to be observed.

[1] יְנֵאֵץ, Hiphil of נָאַץ, and meaning to *cause disgust*, or *is despised*. The old versions and most interpreters render *shall flourish*, deriving the form from נוץ, and understand the silvery hair of the old man as resembling the almond-tree, which blossoms in winter, and its flowers, which at first are roseate in colour, become white like snowflakes before they fall off. But, aside from this doubtful derivation of the form יִנְאַץ (Stuart affirms that "יִנְאַץ for יִנֵּץ has no parallel in Hebrew orthography"), the immediate connexion is against the introduction of such an image as the silvery hair of age in this place. The hoary head can only be thought of as a crown of glory—a beautiful sight; but to introduce it between the mention of the old man's fears and terrors on the one side, and the disturbing locust on the other, would make a most unhappy confusion of images.

temptation of seeking manifold meanings in the particular figures. By the minute search for some special significance in every allusion the mind becomes wearied and overcrowded with the particular illustrations, so as to be likely to miss entirely the great thought which should be kept mainly in view.

Ruin of false prophets allegorized in Ezek. xiii, 10-15.

The work of the false prophets in Israel, and the ruin of both it and them, are set forth allegorically in Ezek. xiii, 10–15. The people are represented as building a wall, and the prophets as plastering it over with תָּפֵל, a sort of *coating* or whitewash (comp. Matt. xxiii, 27; Acts xxiii, 3), designed to cover the worthless material of which the wall is built, and also to hide its unsafe construction. Ewald observes that this word (תָּפֵל) denotes elsewhere what is absurd intellectually, what is inconsistent with itself; here the mortar which does not hold together, clay without straw, or dry clay.[1] The meaning of these figures is very clear. The people built up vain hopes, and the false prophets covered them over with deceitful words and promises; they "saw vanity and divined a lie" (verses 7 and 9). The ruin of wall and plastering and plasterers is announced by Jehovah's oracle as fearfully effected by an overwhelming rain of judgment; the rain is accompanied by falling hailstones and a violent rushing tempest; all these together hurl wall and plastering to the ground, expose the false foundations, and utterly destroy the lying prophets in the general ruin. Here we have, in the form of an allegory, or extended metaphor, the same image, substantially, which our Lord puts in the form of a simile at the close of the sermon on the mount (Matt. vii, 26, 27).[2]

Allegory of wise and unwise masterbuilding.

The much-disputed passage in 1 Cor. iii, 10–15, is an allegory. In the preceding context Paul represents himself and Apollos as the ministers through whom the Corinthians had believed. "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (ver. 6). He shows his appreciation of the honour and responsibility of such ministry by saying (ver. 9): "For we (apostles and ministers like Paul and Apollos)

[1] Die Propheten des Alten Bundes, vol. ii, p. 399. Göttingen, 1868.

[2] The prophecies of Ezekiel abound in allegory. Chapter xvi contains an allegorical history of Israel, representing, by way of narrative, prophecy, and promise, the past, present, and future relations of God and the chosen people, and maintaining throughout the general figure of the marriage relation. Under like imagery, in chapter xxiii, the prophet depicts the idolatries of Samaria and Jerusalem. Compare also the similitudes of the vine wood and the vine in chapters xv and xix, 10–14, and the allegory of the lioness and her whelps in xix, 1–9. The allegorical history of Assyria, in chapter xxxi, may also be profitably compared and contrasted with the enigmatical fable of chapter xvii.

are God's fellow workers," and then he adds: "God's tilled field (*γεώργιον*, in allusion to, and in harmony with, the *planting* and watering mentioned above), God's building, are ye." Then dropping the former figure, and taking up that of a building (*οἰκοδομή*), he proceeds:

According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise architect, I laid a foundation, and another is building thereon. But let each man take heed how he builds thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than the one laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any one builds on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest, for the day will make it known, because in fire it is revealed, and each man's work, of what sort it is, the fire itself will prove. If any one's work shall endure which he built thereon, he shall receive reward. If any one's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

Are the materials persons or doctrines.

The greatest trouble in explaining this passage has been to determine what is meant by the "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble," in verse 12. According to the majority of commentators these materials denote *doctrines* supposed to be taught in the Church.[1] Many others, however, understand *the character of the persons* brought into the Church.[2] But the most discerning among those who understand *doctrines*, do not deny that the doctrines are such as interpenetrate and mould character and life; and those who understand *persons* are as ready to admit that the personal character of those referred to would be influenced and developed by the doctrines of their ministers. Probably in this, as in some other Scripture, where so many devout and critical minds have differed, the real exposition is to be found in a blending of both views. The Church, considered as God's building, is a frequent figure with Paul (comp. Eph. ii, 20–22; Col. ii, 7; also 1 Peter ii, 5), and in every case it is the Christian believer who is conceived as builded into the structure. So here Paul says to the Corinthians, "Ye are God's building," and it comports fully with this figure to understand that the material of which this building is to be constructed consists of persons who accept Christ in faith. The Church is builded of persons, not of doctrines, but the persons are not brought to such use without doctrine. As in the case of Peter,

Both views allowable.

[1] So Clemens Alexandrinus, Ambrosiaster, Lyra, Cajetan, Erasmus, Luther, Beza, Calvin, Piscator, Grotius, Estius, Calovius, Lightfoot, Stolz, Rosenmüller, Flatt, Heidenreich, Neander, De Wette, Ewald, Meyer, Hodge, Alford, and Kling.

[2] So, substantially, Origen, Chrysostom, Photius, Theodoret, Theophylact, Augustine, Jerome, Billroth, Bengel, Pott, and Stanley.

the stone (Matt. xvi, 18), the true material of which the abiding Church is built, is not the doctrine of Christ, or the confession of Christ put forth by Peter, nor yet Peter considered as an individual man (Πέτρος), but both of these combined in *Peter confessing*—a believer inspired of God and confessing Christ as the Son of the living God—thus making one new man, the ideal and representative confessor (πέτρα),[1] so the material here contemplated consists of persons made and fashioned into various character through the instrumentality of different ministers. These ministers are admonished that they may work into God's building "wood, hay, stubble," worthless and perishable stuff, as well as "gold, silver, precious stones." The material may be largely made what it is by the doctrines taught, and other influences brought to bear on converts by the minister who is to build them into the house of God, but is it not clear that in such case the doctrines taught are the tools of the workman rather than the material of which he builds? Nevertheless, this process of building (ἐποικοδομεῖ) on the foundation already laid, like the work of Apollos in watering that which was planted by Paul (ver. 6), is to be thought of *chiefly in reference to the responsibility of the ministers* of the Gospel. The great caution is: "Let each man (whether Apollos or Cephas, or any other minister) take heed how he builds thereon" (ver. 10). Let him take heed to the doctrine he preaches, the morality he inculcates, the discipline he maintains, and, indeed, to every influence he exerts, which goes in any way to mould and fashion the life and character of those who are builded into the Church. The gold, silver, and precious stones, according to Alford, "refer to the *matter* of the minister's teaching, primarily, and by inference to those whom that teaching penetrates and builds up in Christ, who should be the living stones of the temple."[2] So also Meyer: "The various specimens of building materials, set side by side in vivid asyndeton, denote the various *matters of doctrine* propounded by teachers and brought into connexion with faith in Christ, in order to develop and complete the Christian training of the Church."[3] These statements contain essential truth, but they are, as we conceive, misleading, in so far as they exalt matters of doctrine alone. We are rather to think of the whole administration and work of the minister in making converts and influencing their character and life. The materials are rather the Church members, but considered primarily as made, or allowed to remain what they are by the agency of the minister who builds the Church.

[1] See on this subject above, pp. 126, 127.

[2] Greek Testament, in loco.

[3] Critical Commentary on Corinthians, in loco.

The great thoughts in the passage, then, would be as follows: On the foundation of Jesus Christ, ministers, as fellow workers with God, are engaged in building up God's house. But let each man take heed how he builds. On that foundation may be erected an edifice of sound and enduring substance, as if it were built of gold, silver, and precious stones (as, for instance, costly marbles); the kind of Christians thus "builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii, 20) will constitute a noble and enduring structure, and his work will stand the fiery test of the last day. But on that same foundation a careless and unfaithful workman may build with unsafe material; he may tolerate and even foster jealousy, and strife (ver. 3), and pride (iv, 18); he may keep fornicators in the Church without sorrow or compunction (v, 1, 2); he may allow brother to go to law against brother (vi, 1), and permit drunken persons to come to the Lord's Supper (xi, 21)—all these, as well as heretics in doctrine (xv, 12), may be taken up and used as materials for building God's house.[1] In writing to the Corinthians the apostle had all these classes of persons in mind, and saw how they were becoming incorporated into that Church of his own planting. But he adds: The day of the Lord's judgment will bring every thing to light, and put to the test every man's work. The fiery revelation will disclose what sort of work each one has been doing, and he that has builded wisely and soundly will obtain a glorious reward; but he that has brought, or sought to keep, the wood, hay, stubble, in the Church —he who has not rebuked jealousy, nor put down strife, nor excommunicated fornicators, nor faithfully administered the discipline of the Church—shall see his life-work all consumed, and he himself shall barely escape with his life, as one that is saved by being hastened through the fire of the burning building. His labour will all have been in vain, though he assumed to build on Christ, and did in fact minister in the holy place of his temple.

The passage paraphrased.

It is to be especially kept in mind that this allegory is intended to serve rather as a *warning* than to be understood as a *prophecy*. As the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matt. xix, 27–xx, 16) is spoken against Peter's mercenary spirit, and thus serves as a warning and rebuke rather than as a prophecy of what will actually take place in the judgment, so here Paul warns those who are fellow labourers with God to take heed how they build, lest they involve both themselves and others in irreparable loss. We are not to understand the wood,

The allegory a warning rather than a prophecy.

[1] In his parable of the tares and the wheat (Matt. xiii, 24–30, 37–43) Jesus himself taught that the good and the evil would be mixed together in the Church.

hay, stubble, as the profane and ungodly, who have no faith in Christ. Nor do these words denote false, anti-Christian doctrines. They denote rather the character and life-work of those who are rooted and grounded in Christ, but whose personal character and work are of little or no worth in the Church. All such persons, as well as the ministers who helped to make them such, will suffer irreparable loss in the day of the Lord Jesus, although they themselves may be saved. And this consideration obviates the objection made by some that if the *work* which shall be burned (ver. 15) are the *persons* brought into the Church, it is not to be supposed that the ministers who brought them in shall be saved. The final destiny of the persons affected by this work is, no doubt, necessarily involved in the fearful issue, but for their ruin the careless minister may not have been solely responsible. He may be saved, yet so as through fire, and they be lost. In chapter v, 5, Paul enjoins the severest discipline of the vile fornicator "in order that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord." But a failure to administer such discipline would not necessarily have involved the final ruin of those commissioned to administer it; they would "suffer loss," and their final salvation would be "as through fire." So, on the other hand, the work which the wise architect builds on the true foundation (ver. 14), and which endures, is not so much the final salvation and eternal life of those whom he brought into the Church and trained there as the general character and results of his labour in thus bringing them in and training them.

We thus seek the true solution of this allegory in carefully distinguishing between the *materials* put into the building and the *work* of the builders, and, at the same time, note the essential blending of the two. The wise builder will so teach, train, and discipline the church in which he labours as to secure excellent and permanent results. The unwise will work in bad material, and have no regard for the judgment which will test the work of all. In thus building, whether wisely or unwisely, the *persons* brought into the church and the ministerial *labour* by which they are taught and disciplined have a most intimate relation; and hence the essential truth in both the expositions of the allegory which have been so widely maintained.

Allegory of 1 Cor. v, 6-8.

Another of Paul's allegories occurs in 1 Cor. v, 6–8. Its imagery is based upon the well-known custom of the Jews of removing all leaven from their houses at the beginning of the passover week,[1] and allowing no leaven to be found there during

[1] The allusion may have been suggested by the time of the year when the epistle was written, apparently (chap. xvi, 8) a short time before Pentecost, and, therefore,

the seven days of the feast (Exod. xii, 15–20; xiii, 7). It also assumes the knowledge of the working of leaven, and its nature to communicate its properties of sourness to the whole kneaded mass. Jesus had used leaven as a symbol of pharisaic hypocrisy (Matt. xvi, 6, 12; Mark viii, 15; Luke xii, 1), and the power of a little leaven to leaven the whole lump had become a proverb (Gal. v, 9; comp. 1 Cor. xv, 33). All this Paul constructs into the following allegory:

> Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover, also, has been sacrificed, even Christ; wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened loaves of sincerity and truth.

The particular import and application of this allegory are to be found in the context. The apostle has in mind the case of the incestuous person who was tolerated in the church at Corinth, and whose foul example would be likely to contaminate the whole Church. He enjoins his immediate expulsion, and expresses amazement that they showed no humiliation and grief in having such a stain upon their character as a church, but seemed rather to be puffed up with self-conceit and pride. "Not goodly," not seemly or beautiful (*οὐ καλόν*), he says, "is your glorying" (*καύχημα*, ground of glorying). Sadly out of place your exultation and boast of being a Christian church with such a reproach and abuse in your midst. Know ye not the common proverb of the working of leaven? The toleration of such impurity and scandal in the Christian society will soon corrupt the whole body. Purge out, then, the old leaven. Cast off and put utterly away the old corrupt life and habits of heathenism. You know the customs of the passover. "You know how, when the lamb is killed, every particle of leaven is removed from every household; every morsel of food eaten, every drop drunk in that feast, is taken in its natural state. This is the true figure of your condition. You are the chosen people, delivered from bondage; you are called to begin a new life, you have had the lamb slain for you in the person of Christ. Whatever, therefore, in you corresponds to the literal leaven, must be utterly cast out; the perpetual passover to which we are called must be celebrated, like theirs, uncontaminated by any corrupting influence."[1]

The context.

Paraphrase of the passage.

with the scenes of the passover, either present or recent, in his thoughts.—Stanley on the Epistles to the Corinthians, in loco.

[1] Stanley on Corinthians, in loco.

The more important allusions.

In such an allegory care should be taken to give the right meaning to the more important allusions. The *old leaven* in verse 7 is not to be explained as referring directly to the incestuous person mentioned in the context. It has a wider import, and denotes, undoubtedly, all corrupt habits and immoral practices of the old heathen life, of which this case of incest was but one notorious specimen. The leaven in the Corinthian church was not so much the person of this particular offender, as the corrupting influence of his example, a residuum of the old unregenerate state. So "the leaven of the Pharisees" was not the persons, but the doctrine and example of the Pharisees. Furthermore, the words "even as ye are unleavened" are not to be taken literally (as Rosenmüller, Wieseler, and Conybeare), as if meaning "even as ye are now celebrating the feast of unleavened bread." Such a mixing of literal and allegorical significations together is not to be assumed unless necessary. If such had been the apostle's design he would scarcely have used the word *unleavened* (ἄζυμοι) of persons abstaining from leavened bread. Nor is it supposable that the whole Corinthian church, or any considerable portion of them, observed the Jewish passover. And even if Paul had been observing this feast at Ephesus at the time he wrote this epistle (chap. xvi, 8), it would have been some time past when the epistle reached Corinth, so that the allusion would have lost all its pertinency and effect. But Paul here uses *unleavened* figuratively of the Corinthians considered as a "new lump;" for so the words used immediately before and after imply.

Allegory of the Christian armour.

The vivid allegory of the Christian armour and conflict, in Eph. vi, 11–17, furnishes its own interpretation, and is especially notable in the particular explanations of the different parts of the armour. It appropriates the figure used in Isa. lix, 17 (comp. also Rom. xiii, 12; 1 Thess. v, 8), and elaborates it in great detail. Its several parts make up τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, "the whole armour (panoply) of God," the entire outfit of weapons, offensive and defensive, which is supplied by God. The enumeration of the several parts shows that the apostle has in mind the panoply of a heavy-armed soldier, with which the dwellers in all provinces of the Roman Empire must have been sufficiently familiar. The conflict (ἡ πάλη, a life and death struggle) is not against blood and flesh (weak, fallible men, comp. Gal. i, 16), but against the organized spiritual forces of the kingdom of darkness, and hence the necessity of taking on the entire armour of God, which alone can meet the exigencies of such a wrestling. The six pieces of armour here named, which include girdle and sandals,

are sufficiently explained by the writer himself, and ought not, in interpretation, to be pressed into all possible details of comparison which corresponding portions of ancient armour might be made to suggest. Here, as in Isa. lix, 17, *righteousness* is represented as a breastplate, but in 1 Thess. v, 8, *faith and love* are thus depicted. Here the helmet is *salvation*—a present consciousness of salvation in Christ as an actual possession—but in 1 Thess. v, 8 it is the *hope of salvation*. Each allusion must be carefully studied in the light of its own context, and not be too widely referred. For the same figure may be used at different times for different purposes.[1]

Allegory of John x, 1–16.

The complex allegory of the door of the sheep and of the good shepherd, in John x, 1–16, is in the main simple and self-interpreting. But as it involves the twofold comparison of Christ as the door and the good shepherd, and has other allusions of diverse character, its interpretation requires particular care, lest the main figures become confused, and non-essential points be made too prominent. The passage should be divided into two parts, and it should be noted that the first five verses are a pure allegory, containing no explanation within itself. It is observed, in verse 6, that the allegory (*παροιμία*) was not understood by those to whom it was addressed. Thereupon Jesus proceeded (verses 7–16) not only to explain it, but also to expand it by the addition of other images. He makes it emphatic that he himself is "the door of the sheep," but adds further on that he is the good shepherd, ready to give his life for the sheep, and thus distinguished from the hireling who forsakes the flock and flees in the hour of danger.

Occasion and scope of the allegory.

The allegory stands in vital relation to the history of the blind man who was cast out of the synagogue by the Pharisees, but graciously received by Jesus. The occasion and scope of the whole passage cannot be clearly apprehended without keeping this connexion constantly in mind. Jesus first

[1] Meyer appropriately observes: "The figurative mode of regarding a subject can by no means, with a mind so many-sided, rich, and versatile as that of St. Paul, be so stereotyped that the very same thing which he has here viewed under the figure of the protecting breastplate, must have presented itself another time under this very same figure. Thus, for example, there appears to him, as an offering well pleasing to God, at one time Christ (Eph. v, 2), at another the gifts of love received (Phil. iv, 18), at another time the bodies of Christians (Rom. xii, 1); under the figure of the seed-corn, at one time the body becoming buried (1 Cor. xv, 36), at another time the moral conduct (Gal. vi, 7); under the figure of the leaven, once moral corruption (1 Cor. v, 6), another time doctrinal corruption (Gal. v, 9); under the figure of clothing which is put on, once the new man (Eph. iv, 24), another time Christ (Gal. iii, 27), at another time the body (2 Cor. v, 3), and other similar instances."—Critical Commentary on Ephesians, in loco.

contrasts himself, as the door of the sheep, with those who acted rather the part of thieves and robbers of the flock. Then, when the Pharisees fail to understand him, he partly explains his meaning, and goes on to contrast himself, as the good shepherd, with those who had no genuine care for the sheep committed to their charge, but, at the coming of the wolf, would leave them and flee. At verse 17 he drops the figure, and speaks of his willingness to lay down his life, and of his power to take it again. Thus the whole passage should be studied in the light of that pharisaical opposition to Christ which showed itself to be selfish and self-seeking, and ready to do violence when met with opposition. These pharisaical Jews, who assumed to hold the doors of the synagogue, and had agreed to thrust out any that confessed Jesus as the Christ (chap. ix, 22), were no better than thieves and robbers of God's flock. Against these the allegory was aimed.

Import of particular parts.

Keeping in view this occasion and scope of the allegory, we next inquire into the meaning of its principal allusions. "The fold of the sheep" is the Church of God's people, who are here represented as his sheep. Christ himself is the door, as he emphatically affirms (verses 7, 9), and every true shepherd, teacher, and guide of God's people should recognize him as the only way and means of entering into the fold. Shepherd and sheep alike should enter through this door. "He that enters in through the door is a shepherd[1] of the sheep" (ver. 2); not a thief, nor a robber, nor a stranger (ver. 5). He is well known to all who have any charge of the fold, and his voice is familiar to the sheep. A stranger's voice, on the contrary, is a cause of alarm and flight.[2] Such, indeed, were the action and words of those Jewish officials toward the man who had received his sight. He perceived in their words and manner that which was strange and alien to the truth of God (see chap. ix, 30–33).

So far all seems clear, but we should be less positive in finding other special meanings. The porter, or doorkeeper (*θυρωρός*, ver. 3), has been explained variously, as denoting God (Calvin, Bengel, Tholuck), or the Holy Spirit (Theodoret, Stier, Alford, Lange), or even Christ (Cyril, Augustine), or Moses (Chrysostom), or John Baptist, (Godet). But it is better not to give the word any such

[1] Not *the shepherd*, as the English version renders *ποιμήν* here. This has led to a mixture of figures by supposing Christ to be referred to. In this first simple allegory Christ is only the *door*; further on, where the figure is explained, and then enlarged, he appears also as the good shepherd (verses 11, 14).

[2] For a description of the habits and customs of oriental shepherds, see especially, Thomson, The Land and the Book, vol. i, p. 301. New York, 1858.

remarkable prominence in the interpretation. The porter is rather an inferior servant of the shepherd. He opens the door to him when he comes, and is supposed to obey his orders. We should, therefore, treat this word as an incidental feature of the allegory, legitimate and essential to the figure, but not to be pressed into any special significance. The distinction made by some between "the sheep" and "his own sheep" in verse 3, by supposing that several flocks were accustomed to occupy one fold, and the sheep of each particular flock, which had a separate shepherd, are to be understood by "his own sheep," may be allowed, but ought not to be urged. It is as well to understand the calling his own sheep by name as simply a special allusion to the eastern custom of giving particular names to favourite sheep. But we may with propriety understand the *leading them out* (ἐξάγει αὐτά, ver. 3), and *putting forth all his own* (τὰ ἴδια πάντα ἐκβάλῃ, ver. 4), as an intimation of the exodus of God's elect and faithful ones from the fold of the old Testament theocracy. This view is maintained by Lange and Godet, and is suggested and warranted by the words of Jesus in verses 14–16.

Jesus' explanation somewhat enigmatical.

The language of Jesus in defining his allegory and expanding its imagery (verses 7–16) is in some points enigmatical. For he would not make things too plain to those who, like the Pharisees, assumed to see and know so much (comp. chap. ix, 39–41), and he uses the strong words, which seem to be purposely obscure: "All as many as came before me are thieves and robbers" (ver. 8). He would prompt special inquiry and concern as to what might be meant by *coming before him*, a procedure so wrong that he likens it to the stealth of a thief and the rapacity of a robber. Most natural is it to understand the *coming before me*, in verse 8, as corresponding with the *climbing up some other way*, in verse 1, and meaning an entrance into the fold other than through the door. But it is manifestly aimed at those who, like these Pharisees, by their action and attitude, assumed to be lords of the theocracy, and used both deceit and violence to accomplish their own will. Hence it would seem but proper to give the words *before me* (πρὸ ἐμοῦ, ver. 8) a somewhat broad and general significance, and not press them, as many do, into the one sole idea of a *precedence in time*. The preposition πρό is often used of place, as *before* the doors, *before* the gate, *before* the city (comp. Acts v, 23; xii, 6, 14; xiv, 13) and may here combine with the temporal reference of ἦλθον, *came*, the further idea of position in front of the door. These Pharisees *came* as teachers and guides of the people, and in such conduct as that of casting out the man born

blind, they placed themselves *in front of the true door*, shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, and neither entering themselves nor allowing others to enter through that door (comp. Matt. xxiii, 13). All this Jesus may have intended by the enigmatical *came before me.* Accordingly, the various explanations, as "instead of me," "without regard to me," "passing by me," and "pressing before me," have all a measure of correctness. The expression is to be interpreted, as Lange urges, with special reference to the figure of the door. "The meaning is, All who *came before the door* (*πρὸ τῆς θύρας ἦλθον*). With the idea of passing by the door this other is connected: the setting of themselves up for the door; that is, all who came claiming rule over the conscience as spiritual lords. The time of their coming is indicated to be already past by the *ἦλθον*, not however by the *πρό*, forasmuch as the positive *πρό* does not coincide with the temporal one. . . . At the same time emphasis is given to the *ἦλθον*. They came as though the Messiah had come; there was no room left for him. It is not necessary that we should confine our thought to those who were false Messiahs in the stricter sense of the term, since the majority of these did not appear until after Christ. Every hierarch prior to Christ was pseudo-Messianic in proportion as he was anti-Christian; and to covet rule over the conscience of men is pseudo-Christian. Be it further observed that the thieves and robbers, who climb over the wall, appear in this verse with the assumption of a higher power. They stand no longer in their naked selfishness, they lay claim to positive importance, and that not merely as shepherds, but as the door itself. Thus the hierarchs had just been attempting to exercise rule over the man who was born blind."[1]

The import of the other allusions and statements of this passage is sufficiently clear, but in a thorough and elaborate treatment of the whole subject the student should compare the similar allegories which are found in Jer. xxiii, 1–4; Exek. xxxiv; Zech. xi, 4–17; and also the twenty-third Psalm. So also the allegory of the vine and its branches, John xv, 1–10[2]—an allegory like that of the door and the shepherd peculiar to John—may be profitably compared

[1] Lange's Commentary on John, in loco.

[2] According to Lange (on John xv, 1) "Jesus' discourse concerning the vine is neither an allegory nor a parable, but a parabolic discourse, and that a symbolical one." But this is an over-refinement, and withal, misleading. The figures of some allegories may be construed as symbols, and allegory and parable may have much in common. But this figure of the vine, illustrating the vital and organic union between Christ and believers, has every essential quality of the allegory, and contains its own interpretation within itself.

and contrasted with the psalmist's allegory of the vine (Psa. lxxx, 8–15) which we have already noticed.

The allegorizing process by which Paul, in Gal. iv, 21–31, makes Hagar and Sarah illustrate two covenants, is an exceptional New Testament instance of developing a mystical meaning from facts of Old Testament history. Paul elsewhere (Rom. vii, 1–6) illustrates the believer's release from the law, and union with Christ, by means of the law of marriage, according to which a woman, upon the death of her husband, is discharged from (*κατήργηται*) the law which bound her to him alone, and is at liberty to become united to another man. In 2 Cor. iii, 13–16, he contrasts the open boldness (*παρρησία*) of the Gospel preaching with the veil which Moses put on his face purposely to conceal for the time the transitory character of the Old Testament ministration which then appeared so glorious, but was, nevertheless, destined to pass away like the glory of his own God-lit face. He also, in the same passage, makes the veil a symbol of the incapacity of Israel's heart to apprehend the Lord Christ. The passage of the Red Sea, and the rock in the desert from which the water flowed, are recognized as types of spiritual things (1 Cor. x, 1–4; comp. 1 Peter iii, 21). But all these illustrations from the Old Testament differ essentially from the allegory of the two covenants. Paul himself, by the manner and style in which he introduces it, evidently feels that his argument is exceptional and peculiar, and being addressed especially to those who boasted of their attachment to the law, it has the nature of an *argumentum ad hominem*. "At the conclusion of the theoretical portion of his epistle," says Meyer, "Paul adds a quite peculiar antinomistic disquisition—a learned rabbinico-allegorical argument derived from the law itself—calculated to annihilate the influence of the pseudo-apostles with their own weapons, and to root them out of their own ground."[1]

Paul's allegory in Gal. iv, 21–31, peculiar and exceptional.

We observe that the apostle, first of all, states the historical facts, as written in the Book of Genesis, namely, that Abraham was the father of two sons, one by the bond woman, the other by the free woman; the son of the bondmaid was born *κατὰ σάρκα*, *according to flesh*, i. e., according to the ordinary course of nature, but the son of the free woman was born through promise, and, as the Scripture shows (Gen. xvii, 19; xviii, 10–14), by miraculous interposition. He further on brings in the rabbinical tradition founded on Gen. xxi, 9, that Ishmael persecuted (*ἐδίωκε*, ver. 29) Isaac, perhaps having in mind also some subsequent aggressions of the Ishmaelites upon Israel, and then adds the words

Historical facts accepted as literally true.

[1] Critical Commentary on Galatians, in loco.

of Sarah, as written in Gen. xxi, 10, adapting them somewhat freely to his purpose. It is evident from all this that Paul recognizes the grammatico-historical truthfulness of the Old Testament narrative. But, he says, all these historical facts are capable of being allegorized: *ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα, which things are allegorical;* or as Ellicott well expresses it: "All which things, viewed in their most general light, are allegorical."[1] He proceeds to allegorize the facts referred to, making the two women represent the two covenants, the Sinaitic (Jewish) and the Christian, and showing in detail how one thing answers to, or *ranks with* (*συστοιχεῖ*) another, and also wherein the two covenants stand opposed. We may represent the correspondences of his allegory as follows:

a	[1] Hagar, bondmaid, =Old Covenant,	*συστοιχεῖ,*	The present Jerusalem.
	[2] Sarah, free woman, =New Covenant,	"	Jerusalem above, our mother.
b	[3] Ishmael, child of flesh,	"	Those in bondage to the law.
	[4] Isaac, child of promise,	"	We, Christian brethren (ver. 28).
c	[5] Ishmael persecuted Isaac,	"	So now legalists pers. Christians.
	[6] Scripture says: Cast out bondmaid and son,	"	I say, (ver. 31; v, 1): Be not entangled in yoke of bondage.

The above tabulation exhibits at a glance six points of similitude (on a line with the figures 1, 2, 3, etc.), and three sets of things contrasted (as linked by the braces *a*, *b*, *c*). The general import of the apostle's language is clear and simple, and this allegorizing process served most aptly both to illustrate the relations and contrasts of the Law and the Gospel, and also to confound and silence the Judaizing legalists, against whom Paul was writing.

What authority attaches to Paul's example of allegorizing?

Here arises the important hermeneutical question, What inference are we to draw from this example of an inspired apostle allegorizing the facts of sacred history? Was it a fruit of his rabbinical education, and a sanction of that allegorical method of interpretation which was prevalent, especially among Jewish-Alexandrian writers, at that time?

That Paul in this passage treats historical facts of the Old Testament as capable of being used allegorically is a simple matter of fact. That he was familiar with the allegorical methods of expounding the Scriptures current in his day is scarcely to be doubted. That his own rabbinical training had some influence on him, and coloured his methods of argument and illustration, there seems no valid reason to deny. It is further evident that in his allegorical use of Hagar and Sarah he employs an exceptional and peculiar method of dealing with his Judaizing opponents, and, so far as the passage is an argument, it is essentially an *argumentum ad hominem.*

[1] Commentary on Galatians, in loco.

But it is not merely an argument of that kind, as if it could have no worth or force with any other parties. It is assumed to have an interest and value as illustrating certain relations of the Law and the Gospel.[1] But its position, connexion, and use in this epistle to the Galatians gives no sufficient warrant for such allegorical methods in general. Schmoller remarks: "Paul to be sure allegorizes here, for he says so himself. But with the very fact of his saying this himself, the gravity of the hermeneutical difficulty disappears. He *means* therefore to give an allegory, not an exposition; he does not proceed as an exegete, and does not mean to say (after the manner of the allegorizing exegetes) that only what he now says is the true sense of the narrative."[2] Herein especially consists the great difference between Paul's example and that of nearly all the allegorists. He concedes and assumes the historical truthfulness of the Old Testament narrative, but makes an allegorical use of it for a special and exceptional purpose.[3]

[1] According to Jowett, "it is neither an argument nor an illustration, but an interpretation of the Old Testament Scripture after the manner of the age in which he lived; that is, after the manner of the Jewish and Christian Alexandrian writers. Whatever difference there is between him and them, or between Philo and the Christian fathers, as interpreters of Scripture, is not one of kind, but of degree. The Christian writers lay aside many of the extravagances of Philo; St. Paul is free also from their extravagances, employing only casually, and exceptionally, and when reasoning with those 'who desire to be under the law,' what they use habitually and unsparingly, so as to overlay, and in some cases to destroy the original sense. Instead of seeking to draw subtle distinctions between the method of St. Paul and that of his age, probably of the school in which he was brought up, it is better to observe that the noble spirit of the apostle shines through the 'elements of the law' in which he clothes his meaning."—The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, etc., with Critical Notes and Dissertations, vol. i, p. 285. London, 1855.

[2] Commentary on Galatians (Lange's Biblework), in loco.

[3] J. B. Lightfoot compares and contrasts Philo's allegory of Hagar and Sarah, and shows how the two move in different realms of thought, and yet have points of resemblance as well as points of difference. He shows how, "with Philo, the allegory is the whole substance of his teaching; with St. Paul it is but an accessory." He furnishes also, on the general subject, the following judicious and sensible remarks: "We need not fear to allow that St. Paul's mode of teaching here is coloured by his early education in the rabbinical schools. It were as unreasonable to stake the apostle's inspiration on the turn of a metaphor or the character of an illustration or the form of an argument, as on purity of diction. No one now thinks of maintaining that the language of the inspired writers reaches the classical standard of correctness and elegance, though at one time it was held almost a heresy to deny this. 'A treasure contained in earthen vessels,' 'strength made perfect in weakness,' 'rudeness in speech, yet not in knowledge,'—such is the far nobler conception of inspired teaching which we may gather from the apostle's own language. And this language we should do well to bear in mind."—St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Greek Text, Notes, etc., p. 370. Andover, 1881.

Hence we may say, in general, that as certain other Old Testament characters and events are acknowledged by Paul to have a typical significance (see Rom. ix, 14; 1 Cor. x, 5), so he allows a like significance to the points specified in the history of Hagar and Sarah. But he never for a moment loses sight of the historical basis, or permits his allegorizing to displace it. And in the same general way it may be allowable for us to allegorize portions of the Scripture, providing the facts are capable of typical significance, and are never ignored and displaced by the allegorizing process. Biblical characters and events may thus be used for homiletical purposes, and serve for "instruction in righteousness;" but the special and exceptional character of such handling of Scripture must, as in Paul's example, be explicitly acknowledged. The apostle's solitary instance is a sufficient admonition that such expositions are to be indulged in most sparingly.

Paul's method of allegorizing allowable.

The allegorical interpretation of the Book of Canticles, adopted by all the older Jewish expositors and the great majority of Christian divines, is not to be lightly cast aside. Where such a unanimity has so long prevailed, there is at least the presumption that it is rooted in some element of truth. The methods of procedure adopted by individual exegetes may all be open to objection, while, at the same time, they may embody principles in themselves essentially correct.

Interpretation of Canticles.

The allegorists agree in making the pure love and tender relations of Solomon and Shulamith represent the relations of God and his people. But when they come to details they differ most widely, each writer finding in particular passages mystic or historical allusions, which, in turn, are disregarded or denied by others. In fact, it can scarcely be said that any two allegorizing minds have ever agreed throughout in the details of their exposition. The Jewish Targum, which takes the bridegroom to be the Lord of the world, and the bride the congregation of Israel, explains the whole song as a picture of Israel's history, from the exodus until the final redemption and restoration of the nation to the mountain of Jerusalem.[1] Aben-Ezra makes the song an allegorico-prophetic history of Israel from Abraham onward. Origen and the Christian allegorists generally make Christ the bridegroom and his Church the bride. Some, however, explain all the allusions of the loving intercourse between Christ and the individual believer, while others treat the whole song as a sort of apocalypse, or prophetic picture of the history of the Church in all ages. Ambrose, in a sermon on the

Allegorical methods.

[1] An English translation of the Targum of Canticles is given in Adam Clarke's Commentary, at the end of his notes on Solomon's Song.

perpetual virginity of the virgin Mary, represents Shulamith as identical with Mary, the mother of God. But these are only some of the more general types or outlines of exposition pursued by the allegorists. Besides such leading differences there is an endless and most confusing mass of special expositions. It is assumed that every word must be explained in a mystic sense. The Targum, for example, in chap. ii, 4, understands the bringing into the house of wine as the Lord bringing Israel to the school of Mount Sinai to learn the law from Moses. Aben-Ezra explains the coming of the beloved, leaping over the mountains (chap. ii, 8), as Jehovah descending upon Sinai and shaking the whole mountain by his thunder. The Christian allegorists also find in every word and allusion of the song some illustration of the "great mystery" of which Paul speaks in Eph. v, 31–33, and some have carried the matter into wild extravagance. Thus Epiphanius makes the eighty concubines (vi, 8) prefigure eighty heresies of Christendom; the winter (ii, 11) denotes the sufferings of Christ, and the voice of the turtle-dove (ii, 12) is the preaching of Paul. Hengstenberg makes the hair of the bride, which is compared to a flock of goats that leap playfully from Mount Gilead (iv, 1), signify the mass of the nations converted to the Church, and Cocceius discovered in other allusions the strifes of Guelphs and Ghibellines, the struggles of the Reformation, and even particular events like the capture of the elector of Saxony at Mühlberg! And so the interpretation of this book has been carried to the same extreme as that of John's Apocalypse.

Objections to the allegorical method.

Against the allegorical interpretation of Canticles we may urge three considerations. First, the notable disagreement of its advocates, as indicated above, and the constant tendency of their expositions to run into irrational extremes. These facts warrant the inference that some fatal error lies in that method of procedure. Secondly, the allegorists, as a rule, deny that the song has any literal basis. The persons and objects described are mere figures of the Lord and his people, and of the manifold relations between them. This position throws the whole exposition into the realm of fancy, and explains how, as a matter of fact, each interpreter becomes a law unto himself. Having no basis in reality, the purely allegorical interpretation has not been able to fix upon any historical standpoint, or adopt any common principles. Thirdly, the song contains no intimation that it is an allegory. It certainly does not, like the other allegories of Scripture, contain its exposition within itself. Herein, as we have shown above, the allegory differs from the parable, and to

be self-consistent in allegorizing the song of songs we should either adopt Paul's method with the history of Sarah and Hagar, and, allowing a literal historical basis, say: All these things may be allegorized; or else we should call the song a parable, and, as in the parable of the prodigal son, affirm that its imagery is true to fact and nature and capable of literal explanation, but that it serves more especially to set forth the mystic relation that exists between God and his people.

Canticles a dramatic Parable.

Following, therefore, the analogy of Scripture we may more appropriately designate the Canticles as a dramatic parable. It may or may not have had a literal historical occasion, as the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings iii, 1), or, as many think, with some beautiful shepherd-maiden of Northern Palestine (comp. chap. iv, 8). In either case the imagery and form of the composition are poetic and dramatic, and, as in the book of Job, we are not to suppose a literal narrative of persons actually addressing one another in such perfect and ornamental style. Solomon is a well-known historical person, and also, in Scripture, a typical character. Shulamith may have been one of his wives. But the song of songs is a parable, and its leading actors are, as in all parables, typical of others besides themselves. The parable depicts in a most charming style the highest ideal of pure connubial love, and "we cannot but believe that the writer of this divine song recognized the symbolical character of that love, which he has here embellished. . . . The typical character of Solomon's own reign was well understood by himself, as appears from Psalm lxxii. That the Lord's relation to his people was conceived of as a marriage from the time of the covenant at Sinai, is shown by repeated expressions which imply it in the law of Moses. That, under these circumstances, the marriage of the king of Israel should carry the thought up by a ready and spontaneous association to the covenant-relation of the King *par excellence* to the people whom he had espoused to himself, is surely no extravagant supposition, even if the analogous instance of Psalm xlv did not remove it from the region of conjecture to that of established fact. The mystical use made of marriage so frequently in the subsequent scriptures, with evident and even verbal allusion to this song, and the constant interpretation of both the Synagogue and the Church, show the naturalness of the symbol, and enhance the probability that the writer himself saw what the great body of his readers have found in his production."[1]

[1] Prof. W. H. Green, in American edition of Lange's O. T. Commentary, Introduction, pp. 24, 25. This learned exegete adopts, along with Zöckler, Delitzsch, and some others, what he calls the typical method of interpreting the Canticles. "I am

Accepting, then, the view that the song is of parabolic import, we should avoid the extravagances of those allegorists who find a spiritual significance in every word and metaphor. We should, first of all, study to ascertain the literal sense of every passage. First the natural, afterward that which is spiritual. The assumption of many that the literal sense involves absurdities and revolting images is a grave error. Such writers seem to forget that "the work is an oriental poem, and the diction should therefore not be taken as prose. It is the offspring of a luxuriant imagination tinged with the voluptuousness characteristic of the eastern mind. There love is warm and passionate even while pure. It deals in colours and images which seem extravagant to the colder ideas of the West."[1]

Having apprehended the literal sense, we should proceed, as in a parable, to define the general scope and plan of the entire song. But remembering that the whole is poetry of the most highly ornamented character, the particular descriptions of persons, scenes, and events must not be supposed to have in every detail a spiritual or mystic significance. The mention of spikenard, myrrh, and cypress flowers (chap. i, 12–14), yields an intensified thought of fragrance, and indicates the mutual attractiveness of the lovers, and their desire and care to please one another; and from this general idea it is not difficult to infer similar relations between the Lord and his chosen ones. But an attempt to find special meanings in the spikenard, and myrrh, and cypress flower, as if each allusion pointed to some distinct feature of the economy of grace, would lead to certain failure in the exegesis. The carping critics who have found fault with the descriptions of the bodies of Solomon and Shulamith, and condemned them as revolting to a chaste imagination, too readily ignore the fact that from the historical standpoint of the ancient writer these were the noblest ideals of the perfect human form, which, according to the psalmist (Psa. cxxxix, 14), is "fearfully and wonderfully made." The highly wrought eulogy of the person of the beloved (chap. v, 10–16) gives a vivid idea of his surpassing beauty and perfection, and, like John's glowing vision of the Son of man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks (Rev. i, 13–16), may well depict the glorious person of the Lord. But the description must be taken as a whole, and not torn into pieces by an effort to

not sure," he says, "but the absence of the name of God, and of any distinctive religious expressions throughout the song, is thus to be accounted for—that the writer, conscious of the parabolic character of what he is describing, felt that there would be an incongruity in mingling the symbol with the thing symbolized."

[1] Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, vol. ii, p. 404.

find some separate attribute or doctrine of the Divine Person in head, hair, eyes, etc. The same principle must be maintained in explaining the description of the charmingly beautiful and perfect form of Shulamith in chap. vii, 2–6. The allegorical interpreters have been guilty of the most extravagant folly in spiritualizing every part of that portraiture of womanly beauty. But, taken as a whole, it may appropriately set forth, in type, the perfection and beauty of "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v, 27).

CHAPTER VIII.

PROVERBS AND GNOMIC POETRY.

Proverbs defined and described.

THE Old Testament Book of Proverbs has been appropriately called an Anthology of Hebrew gnomes.[1] Its general form is poetic, and follows the usual methods of Hebrew parallelism. The simpler proverbs are in the form of distichs, and consist of synonymous, antithetic and synthetic parallelisms, as has been explained in a previous part of this work.[2] But there are many involved passages and obscure allusions, and the book contains riddles, enigmas, or dark sayings (מְלִיצָה, חִידָה), as well as proverbs (מָשָׁל). Many a proverb is also a condensed parable; some consist of metaphors, some of similes, and some are extended into allegories. In the interpretation of all scriptural proverbs it is important, therefore, to distinguish between their substance and their form.

The Hebrew word for *proverb* (מָשָׁל) is derived from the verb מָשַׁל, which signifies to *liken* or *compare*. The same verb means also to *rule*, or *have dominion*, and some have sought to trace a logical connexion between the two significations; but, more probably, as Gesenius suggests, two distinct and independent radicals have coalesced under this one form. The proverb proper will generally be found, in its ultimate analysis, to be a comparison or similitude. Thus, the saying, which became a proverb (מָשָׁל) in Israel, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" arose from his prophesying after the manner of the prophets with whom he came in contact (1 Sam. x, 10–12). The proverb used by Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth,

[1] Bruch's Weisheitslehre der Hebräer, p. 104. Strasburg, 1851.

[2] See above, pp. 149–153.

"Physician, heal thyself," is a condensed parable, as, indeed, it is there called (Luke iv, 23), and it would be no difficult task to enlarge it into a parabolic narrative. Herein also we may see how proverbs and parables came to be designated by the same word. The word *παροιμία, adage, byword*, expresses more nearly the later idea commonly associated with the Hebrew מָשָׁל, and stands as its representative in the Septuagint. In the New Testament it is used in the sense of adage, or common byword, in 2 Peter ii, 22, but in John's Gospel it denotes more especially an enigmatical discourse (John x, 6; xvi, 15, 29).[1]

Called Gnomic because of pointed sentiment.

Proverbs proper are therefore to be understood as short, pithy sayings, in which a wise counsel, a moral lesson, or a suggestive experience, is expressed in memorable form. Such sayings are often called *gnomic* because of their pointed and sententious form and force. "The earliest ethical and practical wisdom of most ancient nations," observes Conant, "found expression in short, pithy, and pointed sayings. These embodied, in few words, the suggestions of common experience, or of individual reflection and observation. Acute observers and thinkers, accustomed to generalize the facts of experience, and to reason from first principles, were fond of clothing their results in striking apophthegms, conveying some instruction or witty reflection, some moral or religious truth, a maxim of worldly prudence or policy, or a practical rule of life. These were expressed in terms aptly chosen to awaken attention, or inquiry, and reflection, and in a form that fixed them indelibly in the memory. They thus became elements of the national and popular thought, as inseparable from the mental habits of the people as the power of perception itself."[2] "Proverbs," says another, "are characteristic of a comparatively early stage in the mental growth of most nations. Men find in the outer world analogies to their own experience, and are helped by them to generalize and formulate what they have observed. A single startling or humorous fact fixes itself in their minds as the type to which all like facts may be referred, as when men used the proverb, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' The mere result of an induction to which other instances may be referred fixes itself in their minds with the charm of a discovery, as in 'the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked' (1 Sam. xxiv, 13). . . . Such proverbs are found in the history of all nations, generally in their earlier stages. For the most part there is no record of

[1] Comp. above, p. 177.

[2] The Book of Proverbs, with Hebrew text, King James' Version, and Revised Version, etc. For the American Bible Union. Introduction, p. 3. New York, 1872.

their birth. No one knows their author. They find acceptance among men, not as resting upon the authority of a reverend name, but from their inherent truth, or semblance of truth."[1]

Rules for the interpretation of proverbs.

The biblical proverbs are not confined to the book which bears that title. The Book of Ecclesiastes contains many a gnomic sentence. Proverbs appear also in almost every part of the Scriptures, and, from the definition and origin of proverbs, as given above, it will be readily seen that much care and discrimination may be often required for their proper exposition. In such exposition the following observations will be found of practical value and importance.

Discrimination of form and figure.

1. As proverbs may consist of simile, metaphor, parable, or allegory, the interpreter should, first of all, determine to which of these classes of figures, if to any, the proverb properly belongs. We have seen above that Prov. v, 15–18, is an allegory. In Prov. i, 20; viii, 1; ix, 1, wisdom is personified. Eccles. ix, 13–18, is a combination of parable and proverb, the parable serving to illustrate the proverb. Some proverbial similes are of the nature of a conundrum, requiring us to pause and study awhile before we catch the point of comparison. The same is true of some proverbial expressions in which the comparison is not formally stated, but implied. Thus, in Prov. xxvi, 8, "As binding a stone in a sling, so is he that gives honour to a fool." Here is a formal comparison, the point of which is not at first apparent, but it soon dawns on the mind as we reflect that the binding fast of a stone in a sling would of itself be a piece of folly. The next verse is enigmatical: "A thornbush (חוֹחַ) goes up in a drunkard's hand, and a proverb in the mouth of fools." The distich implies a comparison between the thornbush in the drunkard's hand and a proverb in the mouth of fools. But what is the point of comparison? The passage is obscure by reason of the uncertainty attaching to the word חוֹחַ, which may mean *thorn*, *thornbush*, or *thistle*. The authorized English version reads: "As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools." Stuart renders: "As a thornbush which is elevated [riseth up, Zöckler] in the hand of a drunkard, so is a proverb in the mouth of a fool," and he explains as follows: "As a drunken man, who holds a high thornbush in his hand, will be very apt to injure others or himself, so a fool's words will injure himself or others."[2] But Conant translates and explains the passage thus: "A thorn comes up

[1] Prof. Plumptre in the Speaker's Commentary on Proverbs (Am. ed.). Introduction, p. 514.

[2] Commentary on Proverbs, in loco.

into the drunkard's hand, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools. . . . The drunkard's hand, as he gropes around, blindly grasping at whatever comes in his way, is pierced by a thorn. So fares the fool when he awkwardly attempts to apply some sharp saying of the wise." The enigmatical character of the next verse we have already noticed (p. 181). It is evident, therefore, from this variety in the nature and style of proverbs, that the interpreter should be able to determine the exact character of each proverbial passage which he essays to explain.

Critical and practical sagacity.

2. Great critical and practical sagacity is also necessary both to determine the character of a proverb and to apprehend its scope and bearing. Many proverbs are literal statements of fact, the results of observation and experience; as, "A child is known by his doings, whether pure and whether right his deed" (Prov. xx, 11). Many are simple precepts and maxims of a virtuous life, or warnings against sin, which any one can understand, as, "Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and upon thine own understanding do not rely" (Prov. iii, 5). "In the path of the wicked come thou not, and proceed not in the way of the evil" (Prov. iv, 14). But there are other proverbs that seem to defy all critical sharpness and ingenuity, as, "To eat much honey is not good, and to search out their glory is glory" (Prov. xxv, 27). The last clause has been a puzzle to all exegetes. Some, as the Authorized Version, carry over the negative particle from the preceding sentence, and so make the author say the precise opposite of what he does say. Others reject the *usus loquendi* of the verb חָקַר, to *search out*, and, appealing to the corresponding Arabic root, make the word mean to *despise:* "To despise their glory is glory." Others take the word כָּבוֹד, *glory*, in its radical sense of *weight:* "To search into weighty matters is itself a weight; i. e., men soon become satiated with it as with honey" (Plumptre). Zöckler renders: "To search out the difficult bringeth difficulty;" Stuart: "Searching after one's own glory is burdensome." Others suggest an emendation of the text. Amid such a diversity of possible constructions the sagacious critic will be slow to venture a positive judgment. He will consider how many such obscure sayings have arisen from events now utterly forgotten. Their whole point and force may have depended originally upon some incident like that of Saul prophesying, or upon some provincial idiom. So, again, the mysterious word עֲלוּקָה, in Prov. xxx, 15, translated *horseleech* in all the ancient versions, and *vampire* by many modern exegetes, gives an uncertainty to every exposition. Possibly here the text is corrupt, and we may take the word Alukah as a proper name, like Agur in

verse 1, and Lemuel in chap. xxxi, 1. Then we would supply something, as, "Words of Alukah," or, "Words which one spoke to Alukah." It will, at least, be granted that among so many proverbs as have been preserved to us in the Scriptures, several of which were manifestly designed to puzzle, there are probably some which can now be only conjecturally explained.

Context and parallelism.

3. Wherever the context lends any help to the exposition of a proverb great deference is to be paid to it, and it is to be noted that in the Book of Proverbs, as in the other Scriptures, the immediate context is, for the most part, a very safe guide to the meaning of each particular passage. So, also, the poetic parallelisms, in which this book is written, help greatly in the exposition. The synonymous and the antithetic parallelisms, especially, are adapted, by way of the analogies and contrasts they furnish, to suggest their own meaning from within themselves. Thus Prov. xi, 25: "The soul of blessing (liberal soul that is a blessing to others) shall become fat (enriched), and he that waters shall also himself be watered." Here the second member of the parallelism is a metaphorical illustration of the somewhat enigmatical sentiment of the first. So, again, in the antithetic parallelism of Prov. xii, 24, each member is metaphorical, and the sense of each is made clearer by the contrast: "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, but the slothful shall be under tribute."

Common sense and sound judgment.

4. But there are passages in the Book of Proverbs where the context affords no certain or satisfactory help. There are passages that seem at first self-contradictory, and we are obliged to pause awhile to judge whether the language be literal or figurative. "There is," says Stuart, "scarcely any book which calls upon us so often to apply the golden mean between literality on the one hand and flimsy and diffuse generality on the other."[1] Especially must common sense and sound judgment be appealed to where other helps are not at hand. These are, in all doubtful cases, to be our last resort to guard us against construing all proverbs as universal propositions. Prov. xvi, 7, expresses a great truth: "When Jehovah delights in the ways of a man he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." But there have been many exceptions to this statement, and many cases to which it could apply only with considerable modification. Such, to some extent, have been all cases of persecution for righteousness' sake. So, too, with verse 13 of the same chapter: "Delight of kings are lips of righteousness, and him that speaks right things he will love." The annals of human history show that this has not

[1] Commentary on Proverbs. Introduction, p. 128.

always been true; and yet the most impious kings understand the value of upright counsellors. Prov. xxvi, 4 and 5, are contradictory in form and statement, but, for reasons there given, both are at once seen to be true: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he become wise in his own eyes." A man's good sense and judgment must decide how to answer in any particular case. Prov. vi, 30, 31, has been supposed to involve an absurdity: "They do not despise a thief when he steals to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; but if found he shall restore sevenfold, the whole substance of his house shall he give." Theft is theft in any case, but if a man is so impoverished as to steal to satisfy hunger, wherewithal, it is asked, can he be made to restore sevenfold? Whence all that substance of his house? The absurdities here alleged arise from a lack of knowledge of Hebrew sentiment and law. To begin with, the passage is proverbial, and must be taken subject to proverbial limitations. Then the context must be kept in view, in which the writer is aiming to show the exceeding wickedness of adultery. No one shall be innocent, he argues, (ver. 29), who touches his neighbor's wife. A man who steals to satisfy the cravings of hunger is not despised, for the palliating circumstances are duly considered; nevertheless. if discovered, even he is subject to the full penalty of the law (comp. Exod. xxii, 1–4). The *sevenfold* is, doubtless, to be taken idiomatically. His entire property shall be given up, if necessary, to make due restitution. All this of a thief under the circumstances named. But an adulterer shall find even a worse judgment—blows, and shame, and reproach that may not be wiped away (verses 32–35). As for the supposed absurdity of compelling a man who has nothing to restore sevenfold, it arises from an absurdly literal interpretation of the proverb. The sense evidently is, that whatever the circumstances of the theft, if the thief be found, he shall certainly be punished as the case may demand. A man might own estates and yet steal to satisfy his hunger; or, if he owned no property, he could be sold (Exod. xxii, 3) for perhaps more than seven times the value of what he had stolen. So, also, in Eccles. x, 2, it is at once evident that the language is not to be taken literally, but metaphorically: "The heart of a wise man is on his right, but the heart of a fool on his left." The exact meaning of the proverb, however, is obscure. *Heart* is probably to be taken for the judgment or understanding, and the sentiment is that a wise man has his understanding always at ready and vigorous command, while the opposite is the case with the fool.

CHAPTER IX.

INTERPRETATION OF TYPES.

Types and symbols defined and distinguished.

TYPES and symbols constitute a class of figures distinct from all those which we have treated in the foregoing chapters; but they are not, properly speaking, figures of speech. They resemble each other in being sensible representations of moral and religious truth, and may be defined, in general, as figures of thought in which material objects are made to convey vivid spiritual conceptions to the mind. Crabb defines types and symbols as different species of the emblem, and observes: "The *type* is that species of emblem by which one object is made to represent another mystically; it is, therefore, only employed in religious matters, particularly in relation to the coming, the office, and the death of our Saviour; in this manner the offering of Isaac is considered as a type of our Saviour's offering himself as an atoning sacrifice. The *symbol* is that species of emblem which is converted into a constituted sign among men; thus the olive and laurel are the symbols of peace, and have been recognized as such among barbarous as well as enlightened nations."[1] The symbols of Scripture, however, rise far above the conventional signs in common use among men, and are employed, especially in the apocalyptic portions of the Bible, to set forth those revelations, given in visions or dreams, which could find no suitable expression in mere words.

Examples of types and symbols.

Types and symbols may, therefore, be said to agree in their general character as emblems, but they differ noticeably in special method and design. Adam, in his representative character and relation to the human race, was a type of Christ (Rom. v, 14). The rainbow is a symbol of the covenanted mercy and faithfulness of God (Gen. ix, 13–16; Ezek. i, 28; Rev. iv, 3; comp. Isa. liv, 8–10), and the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are symbols of the body and blood of Christ. There are also typical events like the passage of the Red Sea (1 Cor. x, 1–11), and symbolico-typical actions like Ahijah's rending his new garment as a sign of the rupture of the kingdom of Solomon (1 Kings xi, 29–31). In instances like the latter

[1] English Synonymes, p. 531. New York, 1859.

certain essential elements of both type and symbol become blended in one and the same example. The Scriptures also furnish us with examples of symbolical metals, names, numbers, and colours.

Analogy between types and symbols, and certain figures of speech.

Certain analogies may be traced between types and symbols, and several figures of speech. Symbols, being always based upon some points of resemblance between themselves and the things to be symbolized, correspond somewhat closely with metonymy of the adjunct, or metonymy of the sign and the thing signified (comp. above, pp. 161, 162). Then there are analogies between the simile, the parable, and the type, on the one hand, and between the metaphor, the allegory, and the symbol, on the other. Similes, parables, and types have this in common, that a formal comparison is made or assumed between different persons and events, and the language is employed in its literal sense; but in metaphor, allegory, and symbol, the characteristic feature is that one thing is said or seen, and another is intended. If we say "Israel is like a barren fig-tree," the sentence is a simile. In Luke xiii, 6–9, the same image is expanded into a narrative, in the parable of the fruitless fig-tree. But our Lord's miracle of cursing the leafy but fruitless fig-tree (Mark xi, 13, 14) was a symbolico-typical action, foreshadowing the approaching doom of the Jewish nation. If, however, we say "Judah is an olive-tree," we have a metaphor; one thing is said to be another. But in Jer. xi, 16, 17, this metaphor is extended into an allegory, and in Zech. iv, 3, two olive-trees are symbols of Zerubbabel and Joshua," the two anointed ones (Hebrew, sons of oil) who stand by the Lord of all the earth" (ver. 14). At the same time it is to be observed that as the metaphor differs from the simile in being an implied rather than a formal comparison, and as the allegory differs from the parable in a similar way—saying one thing and meaning another—so the symbol differs from the type in being a suggestive *sign* rather than an *image* of that which it is intended to represent. The interpretation of a type requires us to show some formal analogy between two persons, objects, or events; that of a symbol requires us rather to point out the particular qualities, marks, features, or signs by means of which one object, real or ideal, indicates and illustrates another. Melchizedek is a type, not a symbol, of Christ, and Heb. vii furnishes a formal statement of the typical analogies. But the seven golden candlesticks (Rev. i, 12) are a symbol, not a type, of the seven churches of Asia. The comparison, however, is implied, not expressed, and it is left to the interpreter to unfold it, and show the points of resemblance.

Besides these formal distinctions between types and symbols there is the more radical and fundamental difference that while a symbol may represent a thing either past, present, or future, a type is essentially a prefiguring of something future from itself. In the technical and theological sense a type is a figure or adumbration of that which is to come. It is a person, institution, office, action, or event, by means of which some truth of the Gospel was divinely foreshadowed under the Old Testament dispensations. Whatever was thus prefigured is called the antitype.[1] A symbol, on the other hand, has in itself no essential reference to *time*. It is designed rather to represent some *character*, *office*, or *quality*, as when a *horn* denotes either strength or a king in whom strength is impersonated (Dan. vii, 24; viii, 21). The origin of symbols has been supposed to be connected with the history of hieroglyphics.[2]

Natural distinction between types and symbols.

"The word *type*," observes Muenscher, "is employed not only in theology, but in philosophy, medicine, and other sciences and arts. In all these departments of knowledge the radical idea is the same, while its specific meaning varies with the subject to which it is applied. Resemblance of some kind, real or supposed, lies at the foundation in every case. In the science of theology it properly signifies *the preordained representative relation which certain persons, events, and institutions of the Old Testament bear to corresponding persons, events, and institutions in the New.*"[3] Accordingly the type is always something real, not a fictitious or ideal symbol. And, further, it is no ordinary fact or incident of history, but one of exalted dignity and worth—one divinely ordained by the omniscient Ruler to be a foreshadowing of the good things which he purposed in the fulness of time to bring to pass through the mediation of Jesus Christ.[4] Three things are,

Essential characteristics of the type.

[1] It should be observed, however, that this word (*ἀντίτυπον*), as used in the New Testament (Heb. ix, 24; 1 Peter iii, 21), is not equivalent to the technical sense of *antitype*, or *counterpart*, as now used in theological literature. It has the more general meaning of *image* or *likeness*.

[2] Comp. Warburton, Divine Legation of Moses, book iv, sect. iv.

[3] Types and the Typical Interpretation of Scripture. Article in the American Biblical Repository for January, 1841, p. 97.

[4] In the New Testament the word *τύπος*, *type*, is applied variously, but always with the fundamental idea of a *figure* or real *form*. In John xx, 25, it is used of the print of the nails in the Saviour's hands—visible marks which identified him as the crucified. In Acts vii, 43, it denotes idolatrous images, and in verse 44, and Heb. viii, 5, the pattern or model after which the tabernacle was made. In Acts xxiii, 25, it denotes the form or style of a letter, and in Rom. vi, 17, a form of doctrine. Comp. *ὑποτύπωσις* in 2 Tim. i, 13. In Phil. iii, 17; 1 Thess. i, 7; 2 Thess. iii, 9; 1 Tim. iv, 12; Titus ii, 7; 1 Peter v, 3, the word is used in the sense of an *example*

accordingly, essential to make one person or event the type of another.

1. There must be some notable point of resemblance or analogy between the two. They may, in many respects, be totally dissimilar. In fact it is as essential that there be points of dissimilarity as that there be some notable analogy, otherwise we should have identity where only a resemblance is designed. Adam, for instance, is made a type of Christ, but only in his headship of the race, as the first representative of humanity; and in Rom. v, 14–20, and 1 Cor. xv, 45–49, the apostle notes more points of unlikeness than of agreement between the two. Moreover, we always expect to find in the antitype something higher and nobler than in the type, for "much greater honour than the house has he who built it" (Heb. iii, 3). Likeness and unlikeness.

2. There must be evidence that the type was designed and appointed by God to represent the thing typified. This proposition is maintained with great unanimity by the best writers on scriptural typology. "To constitute one thing the type of another," says Bishop Marsh, "something more is wanted than mere resemblance. The former must not only resemble the latter, but must have been designed to resemble the latter. It must have been so designed in its original institution. It must have been designed as something preparatory to the latter. The type as well as the antitype must have been pre-ordained, and they must have been pre-ordained as constituent parts of the same general scheme of divine providence."[1] "It is essential to a type," says Van Mildert, "in the scriptural adaptation of the term, that there should be competent evidence of the divine intention in the correspondence between it and the antitype—a matter not to be left to the imagination of the expositor to discover, but resting on Divinely appointed.

or pattern of Christian character and conduct. But the more technical theological sense of the word appears in Rom. v, 14, where Adam is called a "type of him who was to come." On this passage Meyer remarks: "The type is always something historical (a person, thing, saying) which is destined, in accordance with the divine plan to prefigure something corresponding to it in the future—in the connected scheme of sacred historical teleology, which is to be discerned from the standpoint of the antitype." The word is used in the same sense in 1 Cor. x, 6: "These things (the experiences of the fathers, verses 1–5) became types of us." That is, says Meyer, they were "historical transactions of the Old Testament, guided and shaped by God, and designed by him, figuratively, to represent the corresponding relation and experience on the part of Christians." In verse 11 of the same chapter we have the word τυπικῶς, *typically*, or, after the manner of type; and it here bears essentially the same sense as verse 6. "These things came to pass typically with them; and it was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

[1] Lectures on Sacred Criticism and Interpretation, p. 371. Lond., 1838.

some solid proof from Scripture itself."[1] But we should guard against the extreme position of some writers who declare that nothing in the Old Testament is to be regarded as typical but what the New Testament affirms to be so. We admit a divine purpose in every real type, but it does not therefore follow that every such purpose must be formally affirmed in the Scriptures.

3. The type must prefigure something in the future. It must serve in the divine economy as a shadow of things to come (Col. ii, 17; Heb. x, 1). Hence it is that sacred typology constitutes a specific form of prophetic revelation. The Old Testament dispensations were preparatory to the New, and contained many things in germ which could fully blossom only in the light of the Gospel of Jesus. So the law was a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ (Gal. iii, 24). Old Testament characters, offices, institutions, and events were prophetic adumbrations of corresponding realities in the Church and kingdom of Christ.

Foreshadowing of the future.

The principal types of the Old Testament may be distributed into five different classes, as follows:

1. Typical Persons. It is to be noted, however, that persons are typical, not as persons, but because of some character or relation which they sustain in the history of redemption. Adam was a type of Christ because of his representative character as the first man, and federal head of the race (Rom. v, 14). "As through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one the many shall be made righteous" (Rom. v, 19). "The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a life-giving spirit" (1 Cor. xv, 45). Enoch may be regarded as a type of Christ, in that, by his saintly life and translation he brought life and immortality to light to the antediluvian world. Elijah the Tishbite was made, in the same way, a type of the ascending Lord, and these two were also types of God's power and purpose to change his living saints, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor. xv, 52). In the spirit and power of his prophetic ministry Elijah was also a type of John the Baptist. Abraham's faith in God's word, and consequent justification (Gen. xv, 6), while yet in uncircumcision (Rom. iv, 10), made him a type of all believers who are justified by faith "apart from works of law" (Rom. iii, 28). His offering of Isaac, at a later date (Gen. xxii), made him a type of working faith, showing how "a man is justified by works and not by faith only" (James ii, 24). Typical relations may also be traced in Melchizedek, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and Zerubbabel.

Typical Persons.

[1] Bampton Lectures for 1814, p. 239.

2. Typical Institutions. The sacrificing of lambs and other animals, the blood of which was appointed to make atonement for the souls of men (Lev. xvii, 11), was typical of the offering of Christ, who, "as a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i, 19), was "once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix, 28). The sabbath is a type of the believer's everlasting rest (Heb. iv, 9). The provision of cities of refuge, into which the manslayer might escape (Num. xxxv, 9–34), was typical of the provisions of the Gospel by which the sinner may be saved from death. The Old Testament passover was typical of the New Testament eucharist, and the feast of tabernacles a foreshadowing of the universal thanksgiving of the Church of the latter day (comp. Zech. xiv, 16). The Old Testament theocracy itself was a type and shadow of the more glorious New Testament kingdom of God. Typical Institutions.

3. Typical Offices. Every holy prophet of the Old Testament, by being the medium of divine revelation, and a messenger sent forth from God, was a type of Christ. It was in the office of prophet that Moses was a type of Jesus (Deut. xviii, 15). The priests, and especially the high priest, in the performance of their priestly duties, were types of Him who through his own blood entered into the holy place once for all, and thereby obtained eternal redemption (Heb. iv, 14; ix, 12). Christ is also, as king, the antitype of Melchizedek, who was king of righteousness and king of peace (Heb. vii, 2), and of David and Solomon, and of every other of whom Jehovah might say, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psa. ii, 6). So the Lord Christ unites in himself the offices of prophet, priest, and king, and fulfills the types of former dispensations. Typical Offices.

4. Typical Events. Under this head we may name the flood, the exodus from Egypt, the sojourn in the wilderness, the giving of manna, the supply of water from the rock, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the conquest of Canaan, and the restoration from the Babylonish captivity. It is such events and experiences as these, according to Paul (1 Cor. x, 11), which "came to pass typically with them: and it was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come." Typical Events.

5. Typical Actions. These partake so largely of the nature of symbols that we may appropriately designate them as symbolico-typical, and treat them in a chapter by themselves. So far as they were prophetic of things to come they were types, and belong essentially to what we have defined as typical events; so far as they were signs (אוֹת, *σημεῖα*), suggestive of lessons of present or permanent value, they were symbols. The symbol Typical Actions.

may be a mere outward visible sign; the type always requires the presence and action of an intelligent agent. So it should be noted that typical characters, institutions, offices, or events are such by bringing in the activity or service of some intelligent agent. The brazen serpent, considered merely as a sign—an object to look to—was rather a symbol than a type; but the personal agency of Moses in lifting up the serpent on a pole, and the looking upon it on the part of the bitten Israelites, places the whole transaction properly in the class of typical events; for as such it was mainly a foreshadowing of things to come. The miracle of the fleece, in Judges vi, 36–40, was not so much a type as a symbolical sign, an extraordinary miraculous token, and our Lord cites the case of Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the whale, not only as a prophetic type of his burial and resurrection, but also as a symbolical "sign" for that "evil and adulterous generation" (Matt. xii, 39). The symbolico-typical actions of the prophets are: Isaiah's walking naked and barefoot for three years (Isa. xx, 2–4); Jeremiah taking and hiding his girdle by the Euphrates (Jer. xiii, 1–11); his going to the potter's house and observing the work wrought there (xviii, 1–6); his breaking the potter's bottle in the valley of Hinnom (xix); his putting a yoke upon his neck for a sign to the nations (xxvii, 1–14; comp. xxviii, 10–17); and his hiding the stones in the brick-kiln (xliii, 8–13); Ezekiel's portraiture upon a brick of the siege of Jerusalem, and his lying upon his side for many days (Ezek. iv); his cutting off his hair and beard, and destroying it in different parcels (v); his removing the baggage, and eating and drinking with trembling (xii, 3–20); his sighing (xxi, 6, 7); and his peculiar action on the death of his wife (xxiv, 15–27); Hosea's marrying "a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms" (Hos. i), and his buying an adulteress (iii); and Zechariah's making crowns of silver and gold for the head of Joshua (Zech. vi, 9–15).

Hermeneutical principles to be observed.

The hermeneutical principles to be used in the interpretation of types are essentially the same as those used in the interpretation of parables and allegories. Nevertheless, in view of the peculiar nature and purpose of the scriptural types, we should be careful in the application of the following principles:

All real correspondences to be noted.

1. The real point of resemblance between type and antitype should, first of all, be clearly apprehended, and all far-fetched and recondite analogies should be as carefully avoided. It often requires the exercise of a very sober discrimination to determine the proper application of this rule.

Every real correspondence should be noted. Thus, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, narrated in Num. xxi, 4–9, is one of the most notable types of the Old Testament, and was explained by Jesus himself as a prefiguration of his being lifted up upon the cross (John iii, 14, 15). Three points of analogy are clearly traceable: (1) As the brazen serpent was lifted up upon a pole, so Christ upon the cross. (2) As the serpent of brass was made, by divine order, in the likeness of the fiery serpents, so Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii, 3) a curse for us (Gal. iii, 13). (3) As the offending Israelites, bitten and ready to die, looked unto the serpent of brass and lived, so sinful men, poisoned by the old serpent, the devil, and ready to perish, look by faith to the crucified Christ, and are made alive for evermore. Other incidental analogies involved in one or another of these three may be allowed, but should be used with caution. Thus, Bengel says: "As that serpent was one without venom placed over against venomous serpents, so the man Christ, a man without sin, against the old serpent."[1] This thought may be incidentally included in analogy (2) above. Lange's observation, however, seems too far-fetched and mystical: "The fiery serpents in the wilderness were primarily the form of a divine punishment, presented in a form elsewhere denoting sin. The elevated serpent-standard was thus the type of punishment lifted in the phantom of sin, and transformed into a means of salvation. This is the nature of the cross. The look at the cross is a look at the curse-laden One, who is not a sinner, but a divine token of evil and penalty, and of the suffering of [a substitute for] penalty which is holy, and therefore transformed into deliverance."[2] Such incidental analogies, as long as they adhere consistently to the main points, may be allowed, especially in homiletical discourse. But to find in the brass—a metal inferior to gold or silver—a type of the outward meanness of the Saviour's appearance; or to suppose that it was cast in a mould, not wrought by hand, and thus typified the divine conception of Christ's human nature; or to imagine that it was fashioned in the shape of a cross to depict more exactly the form in which Christ was to suffer—these, and all like suppositions, are far-fetched, misleading, and to be rejected.

The brazen serpent.

In Hebrews vii the priesthood of Christ is illustrated and enhanced by typical analogies in the character and position of Melchizedek. Four points of resemblance are there set forth. (1) Melchizedek was both king and priest; so Christ. (2) His timelessness—being without recorded parentage, genealogy,

Melchizedek and Christ.

[1] Gnomon, on John iii, 14.

[2] Commentary on John, in loco.

or death—is a figure of the perpetuity of Christ's priesthood. (3) Melchizedek's superiority over Abraham and over the Levitical priests is made to suggest the exalted dignity of Christ. (4) Melchizedek's priesthood was not, like the Levitical, constituted by formal legal enactment, but was without succession and without tribe or race limitations; so Christ, an independent and universal priest, abides forever, having an unchangeable priesthood. Much more is said in the chapter by way of contrasting Christ with the Levitical priests, and the manifest design of the writer is to set forth in a most impressive way the great dignity and unchangeable perpetuity of the priesthood of the Son of God. But interpreters have gone wild over the mysterious character of Melchizedek, yielding to all manner of speculation, first, in attempting to answer the question "Who was Melchizedek?" and second, in tracing all imaginable analogies. Whedon observes sensibly and aptly: "Our opinion is, that Melchizedek was nobody but himself; himself as simply narrated in Gen. xiv, 18–20; in which narrative both David, in Psa. cx, and our author after him, find every point they specify in making him a king-priest, typical of the king-priesthood of Christ. Yet it is not in the person of Melchizedek alone, but in the grouping, also, of circumstances around and in his person, that the inspired imagination of the psalmist finds the shadowing points. Melchizedek, in Genesis, suddenly appears upon the historic stage, without antecedents or consequents. He is a king-priest not of Judaism, but of Gentilism universally. He appears an unlineal priest, without father, mother, or pedigree. He is preceded and succeeded by an everlasting silence, so as to present neither beginning nor end of life. And he is, as an historic picture, forever there, divinely suspended, the very image of a perpetual king-priest. It is thus not in his actual unknown reality, but in the Scripture *presentation*, that the group of shadowings appears. It is by optical truth only, not by corporeal facts, that he becomes a picture, and with his surroundings a tableau, into which the psalmist first reads the conception of an adumbration of the eternal priesthood of the Messiah; and all our author does is to develop the particulars which are in mass presupposed by the psalmist."[1]

Notable differences and contrasts to be observed.

2. The points of difference and of contrast between type and antitype should also be noted by the interpreter. The type from its very nature must be inferior to the antitype, for we cannot expect the shadow to equal the substance. "For," says Fairbairn, "as the typical is divine truth on a lower stage, exhibited by means of outward relations and

[1] Commentary on New Testament, in loco.

terrestrial interests, so, when making the transition from this to the antitypical, we must expect the truth to appear on a loftier stage, and, if we may so speak, with a more heavenly aspect. What in the one bore immediate respect to the bodily life, must in the other be found to bear immediate respect to the spiritual life. While in the one it is seen and temporal objects that ostensibly present themselves, their proper counterpart in the other is the unseen and eternal:—there, the outward, the present, the worldly; here, the inward, the future, the heavenly."[1]

The New Testament writers dilate upon these differences between type and antitype. In Heb. iii, 1–6, Moses, considered as the faithful apostle and servant of God, is represented as a type of Christ, and this typical aspect of his character is based upon the remark in Num. xii, 7, that Moses was faithful in all the house of God. This is the great point of analogy, but the writer immediately goes on to say that Jesus is "worthy of more glory than Moses," and instances two points of superiority: (1) Moses was but a part of the house itself in which he served, but Jesus is entitled to far greater glory, inasmuch as he may be regarded as the builder of the house, and much greater honour than the house has he who built or established it. Further (2), Moses was faithful in the house as a minister (ver. 5), but Christ as a son over the house. Still more extensively does this writer enlarge upon the superiority of Christ, the great High Priest, as compared with the Levitical priests after the order of Aaron. Moses and Christ.

In Rom. v, 14, Adam is declared to be "a type of Him who was to come," and the whole of the celebrated passage, verses 12–21, is an elaboration of a typical analogy which has force only as it involves ideas and consequences of the most opposite character. The great thought of the passage is this: As through the trespass of the one man Adam a condemning judgment, involving death, passed upon all men, so through the righteousness of the one man, Jesus Christ, the free gift of saving grace, involving justification unto life, came unto all men. But in verses 15–17 the apostle makes prominent several points of distinction in which the free gift is "not as the trespass." First, it differs *quantitively*. The trespass involved the one irreversible sentence of death to the many, the free gift abounded with manifold provisions of grace to the same many (*τοὺς πολλούς*). It differs also *numerically* in the matter of trespasses; for the condemnation followed one act of transgression, but the free gift provides for justification from many trespasses. Moreover, the free gift differs Adam and Christ.

[1] The Typology of Scripture, vol. i, p. 131. Philadelphia, 1867.

qualitatively in its glorious results. By the trespass of Adam "death reigned"—acquired domination over all men, even over those who sinned not after the likeness of the transgression of Adam; but through the one man, Jesus Christ, they who receive the abundance of his saving grace will themselves reign in eternal life.

Old Testament types apprehended only by the Gospel.

3. The Old Testament types are susceptible of complete interpretation only by the light of the Gospel. It has too often been hastily assumed that the ancient prophets and holy men were possessed of a full knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, and vividly apprehended the profound significance of all sacred types and symbols. That they at times had some idea that certain acts and institutions foreshadowed better things to come may be admitted, but according to Heb. ix, 7–12, the meaning of the holiest mysteries of the ancient worship was not manifest while the outward tabernacle was yet standing. And not only did the ancient worshippers fail to understand those mysteries, but the mysteries themselves—the forms of worship, "the meats, and drinks, and divers washings, ordinances of flesh, imposed until a time of rectification" (*διορθώσεως, straightening up*),[1] were unable to make the worshippers perfect. In short, the entire Mosaic cultus was, in its nature and purpose, preparatory and pedagogic (Gal. iii, 25), and any interpreter who assumes that the ancients apprehended clearly what the Gospel reveals in the Old Testament types, will be likely to run into extravagance, and involve himself in untenable conclusions.

We may appropriately add the following words of Cave: "Having apprehended that the divine revelation to the human race had been made at successive times and by successive stages, the doctrine of types gave utterance to the further apprehension that these revelations were not incongruous and disconnected, but by numerous links, subtle in their location, and by concords prearranged, were inseparably interwoven. To the belief that holy men had spoken things beyond the limits of human thought, the doctrine of types superadded or testified to the addition of the belief that these holy men were moved by one Spirit, their utterances having mysterious interconnexions with each other, this explaining that, and that completing this. . . . It is this community of system, this fundamental resemblance under different forms, which the doctrine of types aids us to apprehend. Nor, when once the conception of the historical development of the Scriptures has been seized, is it

[1] That is, says Alford, "when all these things would be better arranged, the substance put where the shadow was before, the sufficient grace where the insufficient type." Greek Testament on Heb. ix, 10.

any longer difficult to fix the precise significance of the type. Type and antitype convey exactly the same truth, but under forms appropriate to different stages of development."[1]

Limitation of types.

It remains for us to inquire into the validity of the principle maintained by many writers, that only those persons and things are to be regarded as typical which are expressly declared to be such in the New Testament. A leading authority for this view is Bishop Marsh, who says: "There is no other rule by which we can distinguish a real from a pretended type, than that of Scripture itself. There is no other possible means by which we can know that a previous design and a preordained connexion existed. Whatever persons or things, therefore, recorded in the Old Testament, were especially declared by Christ, or by his apostles, to have been designed as prefigurations of persons and things relating to the New Testament, such persons and things so recorded in the former are types of the persons or things with which they are compared in the latter. But if we assert that a person or thing was designed to prefigure another person or thing, where no such prefiguration has been declared by divine authority, we make an assertion for which we neither have nor can have the slightest foundation. And even when comparisons are instituted in the New Testament between antecedent and subsequent persons and things, we must be careful to distinguish the examples, where a comparison is instituted merely for the sake of *illustration*, from the examples where such a *connexion* is declared as exists in the relation of a type to its antitype."[2]

Bishop Marsh's dictum.

Marsh's rule too narrow.

This principle, however, is altogether too restrictive for an adequate exposition of the Old Testament types. We should, indeed, look to the Scriptures themselves for general principles and guidance, but not with the expectation that every type, designed to prefigure Gospel truths, must be formally announced as such. We might with equal reason demand that every parable and every prophecy of Scripture must have inspired and authoritative exposition. Such a rigid rule of interpretation could scarcely have been adopted by so many excellent divines except under the pressure of the opposite extreme, which found hidden meanings and typical lessons in almost every fact of Scripture. The persons and events which are expressly declared by the sacred

[1] The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice, p. 157. Edinb., 1877.

[2] Lectures on Sacred Criticism and Interpretation, p. 373. This extreme view is, in substance, affirmed by Macknight, Ernesti, Conybeare, Van Mildert, Horne, Nares, Chevalier, Stuart, Stowe, and Muenscher.

writers to be typical are rather to be taken as specimens and examples for the interpretation of all types. For it will hardly be deemed reasonable or satisfactory to affirm that Moses and Jonah were typical characters and deny such character to Samuel and Elisha. The miraculous passage of the Jordan may have as profound a typical significance as that of the Red Sea, and the sweetened waters of the desert as that of the smitten rock in Horeb. Our Lord rebuked the two disciples for having a heart so dull and slow to believe in all things which the prophets spoke (Luke xxiv, 25), clearly implying the duty of seeking to apprehend the sense of all the prophetic Scriptures. A similar reproof is administered to the Hebrews (Heb. v, 10–14) for their incapacity to understand the typical character of Melchizedek, "thus placing it beyond a doubt," says Fairbairn, "that it is both the duty and the privilege of the Church, with that measure of the Spirit's grace which it is the part even of private Christians to possess, to search into the types of ancient Scripture and come to a correct understanding of them. To deny this is plainly to withhold an important privilege from the Church of Christ, to dissuade from it is to encourage the neglect of an incumbent duty." [1]

A better principle.

Such Old Testament persons and events as are cited for typical lessons should always, however, possess some notably exceptional importance. Some have taken Abel, as a keeper of sheep, to be a type of Christ the great Shepherd. But a score of others might as well be instanced, and the analogy is, therefore, too common to be exalted into the dignity of a prefiguring type. So, also, as we have said, every prophet, priest, and king of the Old Testament, considering merely their offices, were types of Christ; but it would be improper to cite every one, of whom we have any recorded history, as a type. Only exceptional characters, such as Moses, Aaron, and David, are to be so used. Each case must be determined on its own merits by the good sense and sound judgment of the interpreter; and his exegetical discernment must be disciplined by a thorough study of such characters as are acknowledged on all hands to be scriptural types.

[1] Typology, vol. i, page 29. See this subject more amply discussed by this writer in connexion with the passage above quoted (pp. 26–32) where he ably shows that the writers belonging to the school of Marsh "drop a golden principle for the sake of avoiding a few lawless aberrations." He observes that their system of procedure "sets such narrow limits to our inquiries that we cannot, indeed, wander far into the regions of extravagance. But in the very prescription of these limits it wrongfully withholds from us the key of knowledge, and shuts us up to evils scarcely less to be deprecated than those it seeks to correct."

CHAPTER X.

INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOLS.

BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM is, in many respects, one of the most difficult subjects with which the interpreter of divine revelation has to deal. Spiritual truths, prophetic oracles, and things unseen and eternal, have been represented enigmatically in sacred symbols, and it appears to have been the pleasure of the Great Author of divine revelation that many of the deepest mysteries of providence and grace should be thus enshrined. And, because of its mystic and enigmatic character, this whole subject of symbolism demands of the interpreter a sober and discriminating judgment, a most delicate taste, a thorough collation and comparison of Scripture symbols, and a rational and self-consistent procedure in their explanation. Difficulties of the subject.

The proper and logical method of investigating the principles of symbolization is first to collate a sufficient number and variety of the biblical symbols, especially such as are accompanied by an authoritative solution. And it is all-important that we do not admit into such a collation any objects which are not veritable symbols, for such a fundamental fallacy would necessarily vitiate our whole subsequent procedure. Having brought together in one field of view a goodly number of unquestionable examples, our next step is to mark carefully the principles and methods exhibited in the exposition of those symbols which are accompanied by a solution. As, in the interpretation of parables, we make the expositions of our Lord a main guide to the understanding of all parables, so from the solution of symbols furnished by the sacred writers we should, as far as possible, learn the principles by which all symbols are to be interpreted. Principles of procedure.

It is scarcely to be disputed that the cherubim and flaming sword placed at the east of Eden (Gen. iii, 24), the burning bush at Horeb (Exod. iii, 2), and the pillars of cloud and fire which went before the Israelites (Exod. xiii, 21) were of symbolical import. In a scientific classification of symbols these are, perhaps, sufficiently exceptional to be placed by themselves, and designated as miraculously signal. Other symbols are appropriately named material, because they consist of material Classification of symbols.

objects, as the blood offered in expiatory sacrifices, the bread and wine of the Eucharist, and the tabernacle and temple with their apartments and furniture. But by far the more numerous symbols are the visional, including all such as were seen in the dreams and visions of the prophets. Under one or the other of these three heads we may bring all the biblical symbols, and any attempt at a more minute classification would, at this stage of our investigation, be unnecessary and inexpedient.[1]

The Almond Rod.

As the visional symbols are the most numerous and common, and many of them have special explanations, we begin with these, and take the simplest and less important first. In Jer. i, 11, the prophet is represented as seeing "a rod of an almond tree," which is at once explained as a symbol of the active vigilance with which Jehovah would attend to the performance of his word. The key to the explanation is found in the Hebrew name of the almond tree, שָׁקֵד, which Gesenius defines as "the waker, so called as being the earliest of all trees to awake from the sleep of winter."[2] In verse 12 the Lord appropriates this word in its verbal form, and says: "For I am watching (שֹׁקֵד) over my word to perform it."

[1] Winthrop, in his Essay on the Characteristics and Laws of Prophetic Symbols (2d ed., New York, 1854, pp. 16–19), adopting substantially the theory of Mr. D. N. Lord (Theological and Literary Journal for April, 1851, p. 668), divides what he regards as the biblical symbols into five classes, as follows: (1) Living conscious agents, as God, the Son of man, the Lamb, angels, men, souls (Rev. vi, 9), beasts, monster animals, and insects; (2) dead bodies, as the slain witnesses in Rev. xi; (3) natural unconscious agents or objects, as the earth, sun, moon, stars, and waters; (4) artificial objects, as candlesticks, sword, cities, books, diadems, and white robes; (5) acts, effects, characteristics, conditions, and relations of agents and objects, as speaking, fighting, and colour. But a large proportion of the agents and objects he enumerates are not symbols. He makes God and Christ, disembodied souls, risen saints, and living men, symbols of themselves! Other objects named, as acts, effects, colours, and relations, are symbolical only as they form part of a composite image, and should be rather designated as symbolical *attributes*, and not erected into independent symbols. E. R. Craven, the American editor of Lange on the Revelation (pp. 145, 146), adopts the first four classes of Lord and Winthrop, and then propounds a further classification based upon the relations of symbols to the ultimate objects symbolized. He finds five orders, which he designates (1) immediate-similar, (2) immediate-ideal, (3) mediate-individual, (4) classical, and (5) aberrant. But he falls into the error of Lord and Winthrop, of making an object symbolize itself. His immediate-similar, and at least some of his immediate-symbols, cannot, for this reason, be accepted as symbols until proven to be such by valid evidence. Such proof we do not find that he has attempted to produce.

[2] Heb. Lex., sub verbo. Pliny (Hist. Nat., xvi, 25) observes that the almond blossoms first of all trees in the month of January, and matures its fruit in March. Nägelsbach (Com. on Jeremiah, in loco) remarks: "What the cock is among domestic animals, the almond is among trees."

A seething pot (סִיר נָפוּחַ, *a pot blown upon*, i. e., by fire) appeared to the prophet with "its face from the face of the north" (Jer. i, 13), that is, its front and opening were turned toward the prophet at Jerusalem, as if a furious fire were pouring its blaze upon its northern side, and was likely to overturn it and drive its boiling hot waters southward "upon all the cities of Judah" (ver. 15). This is explained in the immediate context as the irruption of "all the families of the kingdoms of the north" upon the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. "The swelling waters of a flood are the usual symbol of any overwhelming calamity (Psa. lxix, 1, 2), and especially of a hostile invasion (Isa. viii, 7, 8); but this is a flood of scalding waters whose very touch is death."[1] Here, also, in the inspired exposition of the vision, appears a play upon Hebrew words. Jehovah says, in verse 14, "From the north shall be opened (תִּפָּתַח) the evil upon all the inhabitants of the land." There is a designed assonance between נָפוּחַ in verse 13 and תִּפָּתַח in verse 14. The Seething Pot.

The symbol of the good and bad figs, in Jer. xxiv, is accompanied by an ample exposition. The prophet saw "two baskets of figs set before the temple of Jehovah" (ver. 1), as if they had been placed there as offerings to the Lord. The good figs were pronounced very good, and the bad figs were very bad, and, for that reason, not fit to be eaten (ver. 3). The good figs represent, according to the Lord's own showing, the better classes of the Jewish people, who were to be taken for a godly discipline to the land of the Chaldæans, and in due time brought back again. The bad figs represent Zedekiah and the miserable remnant that were left with him in the land of Judah, but were soon cut off or driven away. The good and bad Figs.

Very similar is Amos' vision of "a basket of summer fruit" (Amos viii, 1), that is, early-ripe fruit (קַיִץ; comp. 2 Sam. xvi, 1, and Isa. xvi, 9) ready to be gathered. It was a symbol of the end (קֵץ) about to come upon Israel. As in the symbols of the almond rod and the seething pot, there is here also a paronomasia of the Hebrew words for *ripe fruit* and *end*, *qayits* and *qets*. The people are *ripe* for judgment, and Jehovah will bring the matter to an early *end;* and, as if the end had come, it is written (ver. 3): "And the songs of the temple have wailed in that day, saith the Lord Jehovah. Vast the corpse! In every place he has cast it forth. Hush!" The Summer Fruit.

The resurrection of dry bones, in Ezek. xxxvii, 1–14, is explained of the restoration of Israel to their own land. The vision is not a parable (Jerome), but a composite visional symbol of life from the dead.

[1] R. Payne Smith, in Speaker's Commentary, in loco.

The dry bones are expressly declared to be "the whole house of Israel" (ver. 11), and are represented as saying: "Our bones are dried, and our hope is perished." These bones were not encased in sepulchres, or buried in the ground, but were seen in great numbers "on the surface of the valley" (ver. 2). So the exiled Israelites were scattered among the nations, and the lands of their exile were their graves. But the prophecy now comes from Jehovah (ver. 12): "Behold, I open your graves and bring you up out of your graves, O my people!" In verse 14 it is added: "I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will cause you to rest on your own ground, and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, have spoken and accomplished, saith Jehovah." To all outward appearances Israel was politically and spiritually ruined, and the promised restoration was, in reality, as life from the dead.

The Resurrection of dry Bones.

In the opening vision of the Apocalypse, John saw the likeness of the Son of man in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, and was told that the candlesticks were symbols of the seven churches of Asia. And there is no question but that the golden candlestick with its seven lamps seen by the prophet Zechariah (chap. iv, 2), and the seven-branched candlestick of the Mosaic tabernacle (Exod. xxv, 31–40), were of like symbolical import. These all denote the Church or people of God considered as the light of the world (comp. Matt. v, 14; Phil. ii, 15; Eph. v, 8).

The golden Candlestick.

In Zechariah's vision (Zech. iv) there appeared two olive trees, one at the right and the other at the left of the golden candlestick, and through two of their branches they poured the golden oil out of themselves. The composite symbol was "a word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not in might and not in power, but in my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts" (ver. 6); and the two olive trees denoted "the two anointed ones (Hebrew, sons of oil) who stand by the Lord of all the land" (ver. 14). These two anointed ones are spoken of as if well known, and needing no further designation. The vision had special comfort and encouragement for Zerubbabel. At that time of trouble, when the supremacy of Persia seemed so absolute that Israel might well despair of regaining any of its ancient glory, and might be overawed by an undue estimate of national and military power, the lesson is given that the people of God need not aspire after that sort of prowess. God's people are set to be the light of the world, and their glory is to be seen not in worldly might and pomp, but in the Spirit of Jehovah of hosts. And this Spirit, as contrasted with the might of the world, is to be understood, not solely as the sanctifying grace of God in the heart, but as the divine wisdom and

The two Olive Trees.

power of the Almighty, by which he ever carries to completion the great purposes of his will. The mountains of difficulty which confronted this great leader of God's people should become a plain (ver. 7); his hands had laid the foundation of the house of God (which itself was a symbol of the Church), and he has the assurance that he shall complete it, and in the triumph of his labour even the eyes of Jehovah shall rejoice (ver. 10). "Joshua, the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah" (chap. iii, 1) has already received special comfort and encouragement from the vision and prophecy of the previous chapter, and these two, Joshua and Zerubbabel, are evidently "the two anointed ones" denoted by the olive trees. These were raised up in the providence of God and prepared and consecrated to be the ministers of his grace to the people in that perilous time.[1] There is no propriety in making these trees represent, as some do, the Church and the State; for, if the candlestick represents the Church, it would be incongruous to make one of the olive trees represent the same thing. For the same reason we must reject the view of Kliefoth and Wright, who make the olive trees denote Jews and Gentiles as jointly aiding and sustaining the light of truth, for this also confounds candlestick and olive trees. There is, further, no warrant for making these trees symbolize the regal and priestly offices or orders, for the Scripture furnishes no valid evidence that those *offices* and *orders* as such were ever designed to be media of communicating the grace and power of God to the Church. The office of priest was established, not as a means of communicating divine grace to the people, but rather to offer the people's gifts and sacrifices for sins to God (Heb. v, 1), and the office of king certainly had no such function as that of these olive trees. Neither was Zerubbabel in any proper sense a king. Individual priests and kings were, indeed, a means of blessing to Israel, but an equal or greater number were a curse rather than a blessing. Joshua and Zerubbabel were the chosen and anointed agents for building the second temple, and they fully meet the requirements of the symbol.[2]

[1] "The two sons of oil," says Keil, "can only be the two media, anointed with oil, through whom the spiritual and gracious gifts of God were conveyed to the Church of the Lord, namely, the existing representatives of the priesthood and the regal government, who were at that time Joshua, the high priest, and the prince Zerubbabel. These stand by the Lord of the whole earth as the divinely appointed instruments through whom the Lord causes his Spirit to flow into his congregation."—Commentary on the Minor Prophets, in loco.

[2] Cowles observes: "I prefer to apply the phrase, *the two anointed ones*, to the two orders, kings and priests, rather than to the two individuals then filling those offices, Zerubbabel and Joshua, because this provision for oil through these conducting tubes

The allusion in Rev. xi, 4.

The mention of "the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth," in Rev. xi, 4, is merely a metaphorical allusion to these symbols in Zechariah, and serves to enhance the dignity of the two witnesses whom the writer is describing. But with John they are not symbols, and were not seen as such in his vision. And this fact should make us distrust all those expositions which make the two witnesses represent offices and orders in the Church, or two lines of witnesses, or the Law and the Gospel, or two different Christian bodies, as the Waldenses and Albigenses. If the olive trees in Zechariah represent individuals, the allusion in Rev. xi, 4 would most properly designate the two witnesses as individuals also, and the whole description of their work, power, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, most readily harmonizes with this view. The singularity of their position is also denoted by calling them "the two candlesticks," as well as the two olive trees. They were not only God's two anointed ones, but the two sole light holders which he had remaining in that doomed city "where their Lord was crucified" (ver. 8).

The composite Image of Daniel ii.

The symbols employed in the Book of Daniel are, happily, so fully explained that there need be no serious doubt as to the import of most of them. The great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (chap ii, 31–35) was a symbol of a succession of world-powers. The head of gold denoted Nebuchadnezzar himself, as the mighty head and representative of the Babylonian monarchy (vers. 37, 38). The other parts of the image, composed of other metals, symbolized kingdoms that were subsequently to arise. The legs of iron denoted a fourth kingdom of great strength, "forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and crushes every thing" (ver. 40). The feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay, indicated the mingled strength and weakness of this kingdom in its later period (vers. 41–43). The stone that smote the image, and became a great mountain filling the whole land, was a prophetic symbol of the kingdom of the God of heaven (vers. 44, 45).[1]

was not transient, limited to the lifetime of these two men, but permanent—to continue as long as God should give them kings and priests, and, especially, because permanence was a cardinal idea in the symbol."—Notes on the Minor Prophets, in loco. Here are several unwarranted and fallacious assumptions. There is nothing in the symbol that represents enduring permanence; Zerubbabel, though of royal ancestry, was not a king, but, like Nehemiah, of later times, was merely a temporary governor, and a subject of the Persian Empire. And no king, in any worthy sense of the name, ever reigned in Israel after the exile.

[1] Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree, in Dan. iv, is so fully and minutely explained there, that we need only make this reference to it, and leave the reader to examine the details for himself.

The four great beasts, in Dan. vii, 1–8, are said to represent four kings that should arise out of the earth (ver. 17). The fourth beast is also defined, in verse 23, as a fourth kingdom, from which we infer that a wild beast may symbolize either a king or a kingdom. So in the image, the king Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold (chap. ii, 38), and also the representative of his kingdom. The ten horns of the fourth beast are ten kings (ver. 24), but from a comparison of Dan. viii, 8, 22, and Rev. xvii, 11, 12, it appears that horns may also symbolize either kings or kingdoms. In any such image of a wild beast with horns, the beast would properly represent the kingdom or world-power, and the horn or horns some particular king or kings in whom the exercise of the power of the kingdom centered itself. So a horn may represent either a king or kingdom, but always with this implied distinction. No explanation is given of the wings and the heads of the beasts, nor of other noticeable features of the vision, but we can hardly doubt that they also had some symbolical import. The vision of the ram and the he-goat, in chap. viii, contains no symbols essentially different, for the ram is explained as the kings of Media and Persia, the goat as the king of Greece, and the great horn as the first king (vers. 20, 21). The four Beasts of Daniel vii.

Most of the symbols employed by Zechariah are accompanied by a partial explanation, but so vague and general as to leave much room for conjecture. The riders on various coloured horses, indefinite in number, are said to be "those whom Jehovah sent forth to walk up and down in the land" (Zech. i, 10), and they are represented as saying to the angel of Jehovah: "We have walked up and down in the land, and behold, all the land is sitting and resting" (ver. 11). Whether they traversed the land together in a body, or separately and successively; and whether their mission was merely one of inspection, or for the purpose of bringing the land to the quiet condition reported, are points left undecided by the language of the sacred writer. Any one of these suppositions is possible; and our opinion on the subject should be formed by a careful study of the historical standpoint of the prophet, and the analogy of other similar visions and symbols. Symbols in Zechariah.

The four horns (Zech. i, 18, 19 in Eng. Ver., Sept., and Vulg., but chap. ii, 1, 2 in Heb. text), described in the next vision are explained as "the horns which scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." Horns here, as in the visions of Daniel, doubtless represent kings or kingdoms, but whether these four horns belonged to one beast or more is not stated. Many interpreters understand by the four horns the four kingdoms predicted The four Horns and four Smiths.

by Daniel; but against this view is the consideration that these four horns *have wrought* their work of violence (זֵרוּ, *have scattered*, or *did scatter*), but a part of the kingdoms foretold by Daniel were future from the historical standpoint of Zechariah. Others understand four distinct world-powers, as Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and Persia, while others understand the number four as a symbolical number, having a very general reference to the four points of the compass, and denoting enemies from all quarters. Either of the last two suppositions may be held, but the last named, in the absence of any thing more specific in the language of the prophet, is the safer hypothesis. The four smiths or "carpenters" (vers. 20, 21), which are evidently the providential agencies raised up to awe and cast out the powerful enemies and scatterers of God's people, may denote either human or divine instrumentalities, or an interworking of both.

The flying roll and the Ephah.

The flying roll (Zech. v, 1–4) was a symbol of Jehovah's curse upon thieves and false swearers. Its dimensions, twenty cubits by ten, exactly the size of the porch of the temple (1 Kings vi, 3), might naturally intimate that the judgment denoted must begin at the house of the Lord (Ezek. ix, 6; 1 Pet. iv, 17). In immediate connexion with this vision the prophet saw also an ephah going forth (ver. 6), an uplifted talent of lead,[1] and a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. The woman was declared to be a symbol of "wickedness" (ver. 8). But what sort of wickedness? The ephah and the stone of lead, naturally suggestive of *measure* and *weight*, would indicate the wickedness of unrighteous traffic—the sin denounced by Amos (viii, 5) of "making the ephah small and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit." This symbol of wickedness is here presented as a woman who had an empty measure for her throne, and a weight of lead for a sign. But her punishment and confusion are brought about by the

[1] Very many expositors understand כִּכַּר עֹפֶרֶת to mean a *circle* or *cover of lead;* but, as Wright well observes, "if the ephah had a cover of lead, that cover would scarcely have been termed *the stone of lead*, or leaden stone (ver. 8). The rendering *leaden cover* obscures the real sense of the vision. The Hebrew word rendered *talent* does, indeed, literally mean a circle, and the expression *a circle of bread* is used to denote a round loaf (Exod. xxix, 23; 1 Sam. ii, 36). The word is not found in the signification of a *cover*, though that is a possible signification. It is constantly used in the sense of a fixed weight by which gold, silver, and other things were weighed and measured, and is naturally spoken of in such a meaning here in connexion with the ephah, as the latter was the usual measure of capacity. The talent was the standard measure of quantity, and the weight was made of lead as the most common heavy metal, and was used in all commercial transactions for weighing out money."—Bampton Lectures on Zechariah, pp. 111, 112.

instruments of her sin (comp. Matt. vii, 2). She is cast into the ephah, and the leaden weight is cast like a stone upon her mouth. She is not, however, destroyed, but transported to a distant land, and this is effected by two other women, apparently her aiders and abettors in wickedness, who had wings like the wings of a stork, and who were therefore quick and powerful enough to rescue the one woman from immediate doom, and carry her off and establish her in another land. Thus the children of this world are wise toward their own kind (Luke xvi, 8). This distant land is called the land of Shinar (ver. 11), perhaps for the reason that it was the land where wickedness first developed itself after the flood (Gen. xi, 2).

The four chariots, probably war chariots, which this same prophet saw going forth from between the two mountains of brass, and drawn by different coloured horses (Zech. vi, 1–8), are but another and fuller form of presenting the facts symbolized in the vision of the horsemen in chap. i, 8–11. The import of the mountains of brass is undefined. The chariots and horses "are the four winds[1] of the heavens, going forth from standing before the Lord of all the land" (ver. 5). The black horses were said to go forth to the land of the north, the white behind them (perhaps meaning *to regions behind* or *beyond them*, אֶל־אַחֲרֵיהֶם), and the speckled (בְּרֻדִּים, *spotted*) to the land of the south. Whither the red horses went is not stated, unless we suppose (as is very probable) that the word אֲמֻצִּים, *strong*, in ver. 7, (rendered *bay* in Eng. Ver.), is a copyist's blunder for אֲדֻמִּים, *red*. These, it is said, "sought to go forth to walk up and down in the land" (ver. 7), and were permitted to have their way, and it is added that those that went to the land of the north "have caused my spirit to rest (in judgment) in the land of the north." The four Chariots.

There can be no doubt that these warlike symbols denoted certain agencies of divine judgment. They were, like the winds of the heavens, the messengers and ministers of the divine will (comp. Psa. civ, 4; Jer. xlix, 36), and it is to be noted that the horsemen of chap. i, 8–11, and these chariots, respectively, open and close the series of Zechariah's symbolic visions. No more specific explanation of their meaning than that furnished above is given in the Scripture. Perhaps, in distinguishing the import of the several symbols, we might reasonably suppose that the warlike riders on horses denoted so many military chieftains and conquerors (as for example Shalmaneser, Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh Necho, and Cyrus),

[1] The word רוּחוֹת, *winds*, does not anywhere appear to be used in the plural in the sense of *spirits*, or personal beings; but these four chariots correspond with the mystic wheels of Ezek. i, 15–21; x, 9–13.

and the more impersonal vision of the chariots and horses as conquering world-powers, and having regard to the military forces of a kingdom rather than any individual conqueror; as when, in Isa. x, 5, Assyria (not Assyrian as Eng. Ver.) is a rod of God's anger.

The foregoing Examples authorize—

The foregoing examples of symbols, more or less fully explained, should have great weight with us in determining the general principles of biblical symbolism. We note that the names of all these symbols are to be taken literally. Trees, figs, bones, candlesticks, olive trees, beasts, horns, horses, riders, and chariots, are all simple and natural designations of what the prophets saw. But, while the words are to be understood literally, they are symbols of something else. As, in metonymy, one thing is put for another, or, as in allegory, one thing is said and another is intended, so a symbol always denotes something other than itself. Ezekiel saw a resurrection of dry bones, but it meant the restoration of Israel from the lands of their exile. Daniel saw a great horn upon the head of a he-goat, but it represented the mighty Grecian conqueror, Alexander the Great. But, though one thing is said and another is intended in the use of symbols, there is always traceable a resemblance, more or less detailed, between the symbol and the thing symbolized. In some cases, as that of the almond rod (Jer. i, 11), the analogy is suggested by the name. A candlestick represents the Church or people of God by holding a light where it may shine for all in the house (Matt. v, 15), even as God's people are to occupy a position in the visible Church, and let their light so shine that others may see their good works. The correspondences between the beasts in Daniel and the powers they represented are in some points quite detailed. In view of these several facts, therefore, we accept the following as three fundamental principles of symbolism: (1) The names of symbols are to be understood literally; (2) the symbols always denote something essentially different from themselves; and (3) some resemblance, more or less minute, is traceable between the symbol and the thing symbolized.

Three fundamental Principles.

No minute set of rules applicable to all symbols.

The great question with the interpreter of symbols should, therefore, be, What are the probable points of resemblance between this sign and the thing which it is intended to represent? And one would suppose it to be obvious to every thoughtful mind that in answering this question no minute and rigid set of rules, as supposably applicable to all symbols, can be expected. For there is an air of enigma and mystery about all emblems, and the examples adduced above show that while in some the points of resemblance are many and minute, in others they are

slight and incidental. In general it may be said that in answering the above question the interpreter must have strict regard (1) to the historical standpoint of the writer or prophet, (2) to the scope and context, and (3) to the analogy and import of similar symbols and figures elsewhere used. That is, doubtless, the true interpretation of every symbol which most fully satisfies these several conditions, and which attempts to press no point of supposable resemblance beyond what is clearly warranted by fact, reason, and analogy.

Fairbairn's statement of Principles.

For the interpretation of prophetic symbols Fairbairn enunciates two very important principles: (1) "The image must be contemplated in its broader and commoner aspects, as it would naturally present itself to the view of persons generally acquainted with the works and ways of God, not as connected with any smaller incidents or recondite uses known only to the few. . . . (2) The other condition with which the use and interpretation of symbols must be associated is that of a consistent and uniform manner of applying them; not shifting from the symbolical to the literal without any apparent indication of a change in the original; or from one aspect of the symbolical to another essentially different, but adhering to a regular and harmonious treatment of the objects introduced into the representation. Without such a consistence and regularity in the employment of symbols there could be no certainty in the interpretations put upon them, all would become arbitrary and doubtful."[1]

Same Principles apply to Material Symbols.

The hermeneutical principles derived from the foregoing examination of the visional symbols of Scripture are equally applicable to the interpretation of material symbols, such as the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the sacrificial offerings and ceremonial washings required by the law, the water of baptism and the bread and wine in the Lord's supper. For, as far as they set forth any spiritual fact or thought, their imagery is of essentially the same general character.[2]

[1] Fairbairn on Prophecy, pp. 150, 151. The writer goes on to show how current systems of apocalyptic interpretation violate both of these principles.

[2] Bähr enunciates the following hermeneutical principles and rules for the explanation of symbols: (1) The meaning of a symbol is to be determined first of all by an accurate knowledge of its nature. (2) The symbols of the Mosaic cultus can have, in general, only such meaning as accords with the religious ideas and truths of Mosaism, and with its clearly expressed and acknowledged principles. (3) The import of each separate symbol is to be sought, in the first place, from its name. (4) Each individual symbol has, in general, but one signification. (5) However different the connexion in which it may occur, each individual symbol has always the same fundamental meaning. (6) In every symbol, whether it be object or action, the main idea to be symbol-

Symbolism of Blood.

The symbolical import of the shedding of blood in sacrificial worship is shown in Lev. xvii, 11, where it is stated, as the reason for the prohibition of eating blood, that "the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make expiation for your souls, for the blood makes expiation in the soul." The exact sense of the last clause is somewhat obscure. The phrase בַּנֶּפֶשׁ, *in the soul*, is rendered in the common version, after the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Luther, *for the soul;* but the verb כִּפֶּר is never elsewhere construed with בְּ, referring to that *for which* expiation is made. It is better, therefore, to translate as Keil does: "For the blood, it expiates *by virtue of* the soul." The preposition בְּ thus denotes the means by which the atonement is accomplished. "It was not the blood as such," says Keil, "but the blood as the vehicle of the soul, which possessed expiatory virtue, because the animal soul was offered to God upon the altar as a substitute for the human soul."[1] Delitzsch renders: "For the blood, by means of the soul, is an atonement." That is, as he observes, "the blood atones by the means, or by the power, of the soul which is in it. The life of the sinner has specially incurred the punitive wrath of Jehovah, but he accepts for it the substituted life of the sacrificial beast, the blood of which is shed and brought before him, whereupon he pardons the sinner. The prohibition of eating the blood is thus doubly established: the blood has the soul in itself, and it is, in consequence of a gracious arrangement of God, the means of atonement for the souls of men, in virtue of the soul contained in it. The one reason lies in the nature of the blood, and the other in its destination to a holy purpose, which, even apart from the other reason, withdraws it from a common use: it is that which contains the soul, and God suffers it to be brought to his altar as an atonement for human souls. It atones not by indwelling power, which the blood of beasts has not, except, perchance, as given by God for this purpose—given, namely, with a view to the fulness of the times foreseen from eternity, when that blood is to flow for humanity which atones, because a soul united to the eternal Spirit (comp. Heb. ix, 14) has place therein, and because it is exactly of such value that it is able to screen the whole of humanity."[2]

Nothing pertaining to the Mosaic worship is more evident than

ized must be carefully distinguished from that which necessarily serves only for its appropriate exhibition, and has, therefore, only a secondary purpose. See his Symbolik des mosaischen Cultus, pp. 89–93. Second ed. Heidelberg, 1874.

[1] Commentary on Leviticus xvii, 11.

[2] Biblical Psychology, p. 283. See the whole section on soul and blood, part iv, sec. 11.

the fact that "apart from shedding of blood (*αἱματεκχυσία, pouring out of blood*, Heb. ix, 22) there is no remission." This solemn pouring out of blood was the offering of a living soul, for the warm life blood was conceived as the element in which the soul subsisted, or with which it was in some mysterious way identified (comp. Deut. xii, 23). When poured out at the altar it symbolized the surrender of a life which had been forfeited by sin, and the worshipper who made the sacrifice thereby acknowledged before God his death-deserving guilt. "The rite of expiatory sacrifice," says Fairbairn, "was, in its own nature, a symbolical transaction embodying a threefold idea; first, that the worshipper, having been guilty of sin, had forfeited his life to God; then, that the life so forfeited must be surrendered to divine justice; and, finally, that being surrendered in the way appointed, it was given back to him again by God, or he became re-established as a justified person in the divine favour and fellowship."[1]

No Remission without blood-shedding.

The symbolism and typology of the Mosaic tabernacle are recognized in the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, from which it appears that specific objects, as the candlestick, the showbread, and the ark, had a symbolical meaning, and that the various ordinances of the worship were shadows of good things to come. But the particular import of the various symbols, and of the tabernacle as a whole, is left for the interpreter to gather from the various Scripture passages which bear upon the subject. It must be ascertained, like the import of all other symbols not formally expounded in the Scriptures, from the particular names or designations used, and from such allusions by the sacred writers as will serve either for suggestion or illustration.

Symbolism of the Tabernacle.

The words by which the tabernacle is designated serve as a clue to the great idea embodied in its complex symbolism. The principal name is מִשְׁכָּן, *dwelling*, but אֹהֶל, *tent*, usually connected with some distinguishing epithet, is also frequently used, and is applied to the tabernacle in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers more than one hundred and fifty times. In Exod. xxiii, 19; xxxiv, 26, it is called בֵּית יְהוָה, *house of Jehovah*, and in 1 Sam. i, 9; iii, 3, הֵיכַל יְהוָה, *temple of Jehovah*. But a fuller indication of the import of these names is found in the compound

Names of the Tabernacle.

[1] Typology, vol. i, p. 54. On the symbolism and typology of the Old Testament sacrifices, see Kurtz, Der alttestamentliche Opfercultus (Mitau, 1862); English translation, Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament (Edinb., 1863); Cave, The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice (Edinb., 1877); Keil, Die Opfer des alten Bundes nach ihrer symbolischen und typischen Bedeuting (in Luth. Zeitschrift for 1856 and 1857).

expressions אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, *tent of meeting*, אֹהֶל הָעֵדוּת, *tent of the testimony*, and מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת, *dwelling of the testimony*. The testimony is a term applied emphatically to the law of the two tables (Exod. xxv, 16, 21; xxxi, 18), and designated the authoritative declaration of God, upon the basis of which he made a covenant with Israel (Exod. xxxiv, 27; Deut. iv, 13). Hence these tables were called tables of the covenant (Deut. ix, 9) as well as tables of the testimony. As the representatives of God's most holy testimony against sin they occupied the most secret and sacred place of his tabernacle (Exod. xxv, 16). All these designations of the tabernacle serve to indicate its great design as a symbol of Jehovah's meeting and dwelling with his people. One passage which, above all others, elaborates this thought, is Exod. xxix, 42–46: "It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tent of meeting (אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד) before Jehovah, where I will meet (אִוָּעֵד) you, to speak unto thee there. And I will meet (נֹעַדְתִּי) there the sons of Israel, and he (i. e., Israel) shall be sanctified in my glory. And I will sanctify the tent of meeting (אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד) and the altar, and Aaron and his sons will I sanctify to act as priests for me. And I will dwell (וְשָׁכַנְתִּי) in the midst of the sons of Israel, and I will be God to them, and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell (לְשָׁכְנִי) in their midst—I, Jehovah, their God."

The tabernacle, therefore, is not to be thought of as a symbol of things external and visible,[1] not even of heaven itself considered merely as a *place*, but of the meeting and dwelling together of God and his people both in time and eternity. The ordinances of worship may be expected to denote the way in which Jehovah condescends to meet with man, and enables man to approach nigh unto him—a meeting and fellowship by which the true Israel become sanctified in the divine glory (Exod. xxix, 43). The divine-human relationship realized in the kingdom of heaven is attained in Christ when God comes

Tabernacle symbolizes a divine-human Relation rather than a place.

[1] A full statement of the various opinions of the symbolical import of the tabernacle would require more space than this work allows, and would tend, perhaps, only to confuse. Our purpose is to direct the student to the right method of ascertaining the meaning of the principal symbols, and leave him to pursue the details for himself. For a condensed statement of opinions on the subject, see especially Leyrer, article Stiftshütte, in Herzog's Real-Encyclopädie (Stuttgardt ed., 1855–66). See also Bähr, Symbolik des mosaischen Cultus (Heidelb., 2 vols., 1837–39; revised ed., vol. i, 1874); Bähr, Der salomonische Temple (Karlsr., 1848); Friedrich, Symbolik der mosaischen Stiftshütte (Lpz., 1841); Simpson, Typical Character of the Tabernacle (Edinb., 1852); Keil, Biblischen Archaeologie, pp. 124–129 (Frankf., 1875); Atwater, History and Significance of the Sacred Tabernacle of the Hebrews (New York, 1875).

unto man and makes his abode (*μονήν*) with him (John xiv, 23), so that the man dwells in God and God in him (1 John iv, 16). This is the glorious indwelling contemplated in the prayer of Jesus that all believers "may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one" (John xvii, 21–23). Of this blessed relationship the tabernacle is a significant symbol, and being also a shadow of the good things to come, it was a type of the New Testament Church or kingdom of God, that spiritual house, built of living stones (1 Pet. ii, 5) which is a habitation of God in the spirit (Eph. ii, 22).

The two apartments of the מִשְׁכָּן (*dwelling*, or tabernacle proper), the holy place and the most holy, would naturally represent the twofold relation, the human and the divine. The Holy of Holies, being Jehovah's special dwellingplace, would appropriately contain the symbols of his testimony and relation to his people; the holy place, with ministering priest, incense altar, table of showbread and candlestick, expressed the relation of the true worshippers toward God. The two places, separated only by the veil, denoted, therefore, on the one hand, what God is in his condescending grace toward his people, and on the other, what his redeemed people—the salt of the earth and the light of the world—are toward him. It was meet that the divine and human should thus be made distinct.[1]

The two Apartments.

As the Holy of Holies in the temple was a perfect cube (1 Kings vi, 20), so was it doubtless in the tabernacle. The length and breadth and height of it being equal, like the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi, 16), its form was a symbol of perfection. Here was placed the ark, the depository of

The Most Holy place and its Symbols.

[1] However near God may come to his creatures, and however close the fellowship to which he admits them, there still must be something to mark his incomparable greatness and glory. Even in the sanctuary above, where all is stainless purity, the ministering spirits are represented as veiling their faces with their wings before the manifested glory of Godhead; and how much more should sinful men on the earth be alive to his awful majesty, and feel unworthy to stand amid the splendours of his throne? If, therefore, he should so far condescend as to pitch among them a tent for his dwelling, we might certainly have expected that it would consist of two apartments—one which he would reserve for his own peculiar residence, and another to which they should have free access, who, as his familiars, were to be permitted to dwell with him in his house. For in this way alone could the two grand ideas of the glorious majesty of God, which raises him infinitely above his people, and yet of his covenant nearness to them, be reconciled and imaged together.—Fairbairn, Typology, vol. ii, p. 249.

the two tables of testimony. This testimony was Jehovah's declaration from the thick darkness (עֲרָפֶל) of the mount on which he descended in smoke and fire, and would remain a monumental witness of his wrath against sin. The ark or chest, made of the most durable wood, and overlaid within and without with gold, was a becoming shrine in which to preserve inviolate the sacred tables of divine testimony. The most holy God is jealous (קַנָּא, comp. Exod. xx, 5) for the honour of his law. Over the ark, and thus covering the testimony, was placed the capporeth (כַּפֹּרֶת), or mercyseat (Exod. xxv, 21; xxvi, 34), to be sprinkled with blood on the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi, 11–17). This was a most significant symbol of mercy covering wrath. Made of fine gold, and having its dimensions the same as the length and breadth of the ark (Exod. xxv, 17), it fittingly represented that glorious provision of Infinite Wisdom and Love by which, in virtue of the precious blood of Christ, and in complete harmony with the righteousness of God, atonement is made for the guilty but penitent transgressor. The Septuagint translates כַּפֹּרֶת, *capporeth*, by *ἱλαστήριον*, which word Paul uses in Rom. iii, 25, where he speaks of the "righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ," and "the redemption (*ἀπολύτρωσις*) which is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth *an expiatory covering* (*ἱλαστήριον*), through faith in his blood," etc. The divine provision for the covering of sin is the deepest mystery of the kingdom of grace. "It must be noticed," says Cremer, "that according to Exod. xxv, 22, and Lev. xvi, 2, the Capporeth is the central seat of the saving presence and gracious revelation of God; so that it need not surprise that Christ is designated *ἱλαστήριον*, as he can be so designated when we consider that he, as high priest and sacrifice at the same time, comes *ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ αἵματι* (in his own blood), and not as the high priest of the Old Testament, *ἐν αἵματι ἀλλοτρίῳ* (with blood not his own) which he must discharge himself of by sprinkling on the Capporeth. The Capporeth was so far the principal part of the Holy of Holies, that the latter is even termed 'the house of the capporeth' (1 Chron. xxviii, 11)."[1]

The Cherubim.

The two cherubim, placed at the ends of the mercyseat, and spreading their wings over it, were objects too prominent to be without significance. In Eden the cherubim appear with the flaming sword to watch (שָׁמוֹר) the way of the tree of life (Gen. iii, 24). In Ezek. i, 5–14 they appear as "living creatures" (חַיּוֹת), their composite form is described, and they are represented as moving the mystic wheels of divine providence and judgment (vers. 15–21). Over their heads was enthroned "the

[1] Biblico-Theological Lexicon, p. 306.

appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah" (vers. 26–28). In Rev. iv, 6–8 they appear also as living creatures (ζῷα) "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne." Whatever the various import of these figures, we note that they everywhere appear in most intimate relation to the glory of God. May we not believe that they were symbols of the ultimate glory of redeemed humanity, conveying at the same time profound suggestions of the immanent presence and intense activity of God in all creature life, by which (presence and activity) all that was lost in Eden shall be restored to heavenly places in Christ, and man, redeemed and filled with the Spirit, shall again have power over the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God (comp. Rev. ii, 7 and xxii, 14)? Though of composite form, and representing the highest kinds of creature life on earth (Ezek. i, 10; Rev. iv, 7), these ideal beings had preeminently the likeness of a man (Exek. i, 5). Jehovah is the God of the living, and has about the throne of his glory the highest symbols of life. Both at the gate of paradise and in the Holy of Holies these cherubim were signs and pledges that in the ages to come, having made peace through the blood of the cross, God would reconcile all things unto himself, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens (Col. i, 20), and sanctify them in his glory (Exod. xxix, 43).[1] Then the redeemed "shall reign in life" (*ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύσουσιν*) through Jesus Christ (Rom. v, 17.)

As the Holy of Holies symbolized Jehovah's relations to his people, and intimated what he is to them and what he purposes to do for them; and as its symbols of mercy covering wrath showed how and on what terms he condescends to meet and dwell with men; so, on the other hand, the holy place, with its golden altar of incense, table of showbread, golden candlestick, and ministering priests, represented the relation of the true Israel toward God. The priests who officiated in this holy place acted not for themselves alone; they were the representatives of all Israel, and their service was the service of all the tribes, whose peculiar relation to God, so long as they obeyed his voice and kept his covenant, was that of "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. xix, 5, 6; comp. 1 Pet. ii, 5, 9; Rev. i, 6; v, 10). As the officiating priest stood in the holy place, facing the Holy of Holies, he had on his right the table of showbread, on his left the candlestick, and immediately before him the altar of incense (Exod. xl, 22–27). The twelve cakes of showbread kept continually on the table symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel continually presented as a living sacrifice before God (Lev. xxiv, 5–9).

The Holy Place and its symbols.

The Table of Showbread.

The golden candlestick, with its seven lamps, placed opposite the

table, was another symbol of Israel considered as the Church of the living God. As the showbread represented the relation of Israel to God as a holy and acceptable offering, the candlestick represented what this same Israel would do for God as causing the light of the Spirit in them to shine forth. To all thus exalted may it well be said: "Ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth), proving what is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Eph. v, 8–10).

The golden Candlestick.

But the highest continual devotion of Israel to God is represented at the golden altar of incense, which stood immediately before the veil and in front of the mercyseat (Exod. xxx, 6). The offering of incense was an expressive symbol of the prayers of the saints (Psa. cxli, 2; Rev. v, 8; viii, 3, 4), and the whole multitude of the people were wont to pray without at the hour of the incense-offering (Luke i, 10). Jehovah was pleased to "inhabit the praises of Israel" (Psa. xxii, 3), for all that his people may be and do in their consecrated relation to him expresses itself in their prayers before his altar and mercyseat.

The Altar of Incense.

We need not linger in detail upon the symbolism of the court of the tabernacle, with its altar of burnt offerings and its laver of brass. There could be no approach to God, on the part of sinful men, no possible meeting or dwelling with him, except by the offerings made at the great altar in front of the sacred tent. All that belongs to the symbolism of sacrificial blood centred in this altar, where the daily offerings of Israel were made. No priest might pass into the tabernacle until sprinkled with blood from that altar (Exod. xxix, 21), and the live coals used for the burning of incense before Jehovah were taken from the same place (Lev. xvi, 12). Nor might the priest, on penalty of death, minister at the altar or enter the tabernacle without first washing at the laver (Exod. xxx, 20, 21). So the great altar continually proclaimed that without the shedding of blood there is no remission, and the priestly ablutions denoted that without the washing of regeneration no man might enter the kingdom of God (comp. Psa. xxiv, 3, 4; John iii, 5; Heb. x, 19–22). All those blessed relations, which were symbolized in the holy place, are possible only because of the reconciliation effected at the altar of sacrifice without. Having there obtained remission of sins, the true Israel, as represented in the priests, draw near before God in forms of holy consecration and service.

Great Altar and Laver in the court.

The graduated sanctity of the several parts of the tabernacle is very noticeable. In front was the court, into which any Israelite

who was ceremonially clean might enter; next was the holy place, into which none but the consecrated priests might go to perform the work of their office, and, especially to offer incense. Beyond this, veiled in thick darkness, was the Holy of Holies, into which only the high priest entered, and he but once a year. This graduated sanctity of the holy places was fitted to inculcate and impress the lesson of the absolute holiness of God, whose special presence was manifested in the innermost sanctuary. The several apartments were also adapted to show the gradual and progressive stages of divine revelation. The outer court suggests the early patriarchal period, when, under the open sky, the devout fathers of families and nations, like Noah, Melchizedek, and Abraham, worshipped the God of heaven.[1] The holy place represents the period of Mosaism, that intermediate stage of revelation and law, when many a type and symbol foreshadowed the better things to come, and the exceptional entrance of the high priest once a year within the veil signified that "the way of the holies was not yet made manifest" (Heb. ix, 8). The Holy of Holies represents the Messianic æon, when the Christian believer, having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus (Heb. x, 19), is conceived to "have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. xii, 22).

The graduated sanctity of the holy places.

The profound symbolism of the tabernacle is further seen in connexion with the offerings of the great day of atonement. Once a year the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for himself and Israel, but in connexion with his work on that day all parts of the tabernacle are brought into notice. Having washed his flesh in water, and put on the hallowed linen garments, he first offered the burnt offering on the great altar to make atonement for himself and his house (Lev. xvi, 2–6). Then taking a censer of live coals from the altar he offered incense upon the fire before the Lord, so that the cloud covered the mercyseat, and, taking the blood of a bullock and a goat, he passed within the veil and sprinkled the mercyseat seven times with the blood of each (Lev. xvi, 12–16). All this, we are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews, prefigured the work of Christ for us: "Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation [not material, tangible, or local], nor through the blood of

Symbolico-typical suggestions of the High Priest's action on the day of Atonement.

[1] For a somewhat different conception of the import of the holy places, as representing periods of revelation, see Atwater, Sacred Tabernacle of the Hebrews, pp. 269–271.

goats and calves, but through his own blood entered in once for all into the holy places (*τὰ ἅγια*, plural, and indefinitely intimating more than places merely), having obtained eternal redemption. . . . For Christ entered not into holy (places) made with hands, patterns of the true, but into the heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix, 11, 12, 24). The believer is, accordingly, exhorted to enter with confidence into the holy places by the blood of Jesus, and to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (Heb. x, 19, 22). Whither our high priest has gone we may also go, and the position of the cherubim over the mercyseat and in the garden of Eden suggests the final glorification of all the sons of God. This is the inspiring and suggestive doctrine of Paul in Eph. i, 15; ii, 10, where he speaks of "the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," and "that energy of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly" (*ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, in the heavenlies*, not heavenly places merely, but fellowships, powers, glories); and then goes on to say that God, in like manner, quickens those who were dead in trespasses and sins, makes them alive with Christ, raises them up and makes them sit together in the same heavenly regions, associations, and glories into which Christ himself has gone. Thus we see the fullest revelation of the means by which, and the extent to which, Israel shall be sanctified in Jehovah's glory (Exod. xxix, 43).[1] Then, in the highest and holiest sense, will "the tabernacle of God be with men, and he will tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them" (Rev. xxi, 3). In the heavenly glory there will be no place for temple, or any local shrine and symbol, "for the Lord, the God, the Almighty, is its temple, and the Lamb" (Rev. xxi, 22).

[1] The profound expression, in Exod. xxix, 43, may well be compared with that of Jesus, in John xvii, 24, which, according to the best-authenticated text, reads: "Father, that which thou hast given me (*ὃ δέδωκάς μοι*), I will that where I am they also (*κἀκεῖνοι*) may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou didst love me before the foundation of the world." The pleonastic construction here seems to have a designed significance. The whole body of the redeemed is first conceived as a unit; it is Christ's inheritance, regarded as the Father's gift to him. It is the same as the *πᾶν ὃ δέδωκέν μοι, all that which he has given me*, in John vi, 39. But as the thought turns to the individual beholding (comp. "I shall see for myself," etc., Job xix, 27) on the part of the redeemed the plural (*κἀκεῖνοι*) is resumed. Thus Alford: "The neuter has a peculiar solemnity, uniting the whole Church together as *one gift* of the Father to the Son. Then the *κἀκεῖνοι* resolves it into the great multitude whom no man can number, and comes home to the heart of every individual believer with inexpressibly sweet assurance of an eternity with Christ."—Greek Test., in loco.

CHAPTER XI.

SYMBOLICO-TYPICAL ACTIONS.

In receiving his divine commission as a prophet, Ezekiel saw a roll of a book spread out before him, on both sides of which were written many doleful things. He was commanded to eat the book, and he obeyed, and found that which seemed so full of lamentation and woe to be sweet as honey in his mouth (Ezek. ii, 8–iii, 3). The same thing is, in substance, repeated in the Apocalypse of John (x, 2, 8–11), and it is there expressly added that the book which was sweet as honey in his mouth became bitter in his stomach. These transactions manifestly took place in vision. The prophet was lifted into a divine trance or ecstacy, in which it seemed to him that he saw, heard, obeyed, and experienced the effects which he describes. It was a symbolical transaction, performed subjectively in a state of prophetic ecstacy. It was an impressive method of fastening upon his soul the conviction of his prophetic mission, and its import was not difficult to apprehend. The book contained the bitter judgments to be uttered against "the house of Israel," and the prophet was commanded to cause his stomach to eat it and to fill his bowels with it (iii, 3); that is, he must make the prophetic word, as it were, a part of himself, receive it into his innermost being (ver. 10), and there digest it. And though it may be often bitter to his inner sense, the process of prophetic obedience yields a sweet experience to the doer.[1] "It is infinitely sweet and lovely," says Hengstenberg, "to be the organ and spokesman of the Most High."[2]

Visional actions.

But in the fourth and fifth chapters of Ezekiel we are introduced to a series of four symbolico-typical actions in which the prophet appears not as the *seer*, but the *doer*. First he is commanded to take a brick[3] and engrave upon it a portraiture of Jerusalem in a state of siege. He is also to set

Symbolico-typical acts of Ezek. iv and v.

[1] What Ezekiel and John did in vision Jeremiah describes in other and more simple style. Comp. Jer. xv, 16.

[2] Commentary on Ezekiel, in loco.

[3] לבנה, *a white brick*, so called, according to Gesenius, from the white chalky clay of which certain bricks were made. In the valley of the Euphrates Ezekiel's eyes had, doubtless, become familiar with bricks and stone slabs covered with images and inscriptions.

up an iron pan between it and himself, and direct his face against it, as if he were the besieging party, and had erected an iron wall between himself and the doomed city. This, it was declared, would be "a sign to the house of Israel" (Ezek. iv, 1–3). Evidently, therefore, the sign was intended to be outward, actual, and visible, for how could these things, if imagined only in the prophet's soul, be made a sign to Israel? In the next place he is to lie upon his left side three hundred and ninety days, and then upon his right side forty days, thus symbolically bearing the guilt of Israel and Judah four hundred and thirty days, each day of his prostration denoting a year of Israel's abject condition. During this time he must keep his face turned toward the siege of Jerusalem, and his arm made bare (comp. Isa. lii, 10), and God lays bands upon him that he shall not turn from one side to another (Ezek. iv, 4–8). As the days of this prostration are symbolical of years, so it would seem the number four hundred and thirty is appropriated from the term of Israel's sojourn in Egypt (Exod. xii, 40), the last forty years of which, when Moses was in exile, were the most oppressive of all. This number would, from its dark associations, become naturally symbolical of a period of humiliation and exile; not, however, necessarily denoting a chronological period of just so many years. Still further, the prophet is directed to prepare for himself food of divers grains and vegetables, some desirable and some undesirable, and put them in one vessel, as if it were necessary to use any and all kinds of available food, and one vessel would suffice for all. His food and drink are to be weighed out and measured, and in such small rations as to denote the most pinching destitution. He is also commanded to bake his barley cakes with human excrement, to denote how Israel would eat their defiled bread among the heathen; but in view of his loathing at the thought of food thus prepared, he is permitted to substitute the excrement of cattle for that of man. All this was designed to symbolize the misery and anguish which should come upon Israel (verses 9–17). A fourth sign follows in chapter v, 1–4, and is accompanied (verses 5–17) by a divine interpretation. The prophet is directed to shave off his hair and beard with a sharp sword, and weigh and divide the numberless hairs in three parts. One third he is to burn in the midst of the city (i. e., the city portrayed on the brick), another third he is to smite with the sword, and another he is to scatter to the wind. These three acts are explained as prophetic symbols of a threefold judgment impending over Jerusalem, one part of whose inhabitants shall perish by pestilence and famine, another by the slaughter of war, and a

The prophet's food.

third by dispersion among the nations, whither also the perils of the sword shall follow them.

Many able expositors insist that these symbolical actions of the prophet took place only in vision, as the eating of the roll in chapter ii, 8. And yet they are all obliged to acknowledge that the language used is such as to make a different impression on the mind of a reader. Certain it is that the eating of the roll is described as a vision: "I saw, and behold a hand stretched out unto me, and behold in it a roll of a book" (Ezek. ii, 9). No such language is used in connexion with the transactions of chapters iv and v, but the prophet is the *doer*, and his actions are to serve as a *sign* to the house of Israel. The actions outward and actual.

Five reasons have been urged to show that these actions could not have been outward and actual: (1) The spectacle of such a miniature siege would only have provoked among the Israelites who saw it a sense of the ludicrous. But even if this were true, it would by no means disprove that the acts were, nevertheless, actually done, for many of the noblest oracles of prophecy were ridiculed and scoffed at by the rebellious house of Israel. The assertion, however, is purely a subjective fancy of modern interpreters. It is like the untenable notion of those allegorical expounders of Canticles, who presume to say that a literal interpretation of some parts of the song is monstrous and revolting, but, at the same time, allegorically descriptive of the holiest things! If these symbolic actions of Ezekiel, literally performed, would have been childish and ludicrous, would not any conceivable communication of them to Israel as a sign have been equally ludicrous? As long as the actions were possible and practicable, and were calculated to make a notable impression, there is no objection to their literal occurrence which may not be urged with equal force against their ideal occurrence. Five objections considered.

But it is urged (2) that lying motionless on one side for three hundred and ninety days was a physical impossibility. The prophet's language, however, sufficiently intimates that his prostration was not absolutely continuous during the whole twenty-four hours of each of the days. He prepared his own food and drink, weighed and measured it, and, we may suppose, that as a Jewish fast of many days allowed eating at night while requiring abstinence by day, so Ezekiel's long prostration had many incidental reliefs. The prohibition of turning from one side to another required, at most, only that during the longer period he must not lie at all on his right side, and during the last forty days he must not lie at all on his left. (3) Fairbairn The prostration not without intermissions.

declares that it would have been a moral impossibility to eat bread composed of such abominable materials, since it would have involved a violation of the Mosaic law.[1] But it cannot be shown that the law anywhere prohibits the materials which Ezekiel was ordered to prepare for his food; and, even if it did, it would not follow that Ezekiel might not thus symbolically exhibit the penal judgments that were to visit Israel, when fathers should even eat their own sons, and sons their fathers (chap. v, 10).

The Dates no valid objection.

Another objection (4) is that between the dates given at Ezek. i, 1, 2, and viii, 1, there could not have been four hundred and thirty days for these symbolical actions to really take place. But between the fifth day of the fourth month of the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity (chap. i, 1, 2) and the fifth day of the sixth month of the sixth year (chap. viii, 1) there intervened one year and two months, or four hundred and twenty-seven days, a period not only sufficiently approximate to meet all the necessity of the case, but so closely approximate as to be in itself an evidence of the real performance of these actions. And all this might be said after subtracting from the period the seven days mentioned in chapter iii, 15. But the visions of chapters viii, xi may have taken place while Ezekiel yet remained lying on his side. We are not to suppose that his body was literally transported to Jerusalem, for he expressly states that it was done "in visions of God" (chap. viii, 3). His *sitting* in his house, with the elders of Judah before him (viii, 1), does not necessarily define either his or their posture, and the word יָשַׁב is commonly used in the sense of *abiding* or *staying*. The long prostration and symbolical acts of this priest-prophet would naturally attract the elders of Judah to his house, and cause them to linger long in his presence; and all this time his arm was made bare, and he prophesied against Jerusalem (iv, 7). There was nothing in his posture or surroundings to hinder his receiving, during that signal year and two months, many an additional word and vision of Jehovah. (5) It has been further objected that it was literally impossible for him to burn the third part of his hair "in the midst of the city" (chap. v, 2). But the city here referred to is to be understood of the miniature city engraved on the brick, which consideration at once obviates the objection.

[1] Commentary on Ezekiel, p. 48. Fairbairn's references to Deut. xiv, 3; xxiii, 12–14, and xiii, 1–5, are pointless in this argument, for those passages have no necessary bearing on this subject, inasmuch as Ezekiel was excused from using human ordure. Nor was a mixture of various kinds of food a transgression, as Hitzig imagines, of the law of Lev. xix, 19; Deut. xxii, 9.

There appears, therefore, no sufficient reason to deny that Ezekiel's symbolic actions, described in chapters iv and v, were outwardly performed. Nor is it difficult to conceive the impression which these performances must naturally have made upon the house of Israel—especially upon the elders. After his first overwhelming vision (see chap. i, 28), and the hearing of his divine commission, he went to certain captives who dwelt along the Chebar, and sat down among them in mute astonishment (מְשֹׁמֵם) for seven days (chap. iii, 15). Then Jehovah's word came to him again, and he went forth into the plain, and there again beheld the glory of the cherubim (ver. 23), and received the command to go and shut himself up within his house, and perform the symbolical actions which we have examined. And no more impressive or signal prophecies could have been given than these symbolic deeds. Not to have done the things commanded would have been to withhold from the house of Israel the signs of judgment which he was commissioned to exhibit. The fourfold symbol denoted, (1) the coming siege of Jerusalem, (2) the exile and consequent prostration of Israel and Judah (comp. Isa. l, 11; Amos v, 2), which should be like another Egyptian bondage, (3) the destitution and humiliation of this sad period, and, (4) finally, the threefold judgment with which the siege should end, namely, pestilence and famine, the sword, and dispersion among the nations.

No valid argument against their Outward performance.

Other symbolical actions of this prophet are his removal of his baggage through the broken wall (chap. xii, 3–8), and his eating his bread with quaking, and drinking water with trembling and anxiety (xii, 18), his deep and bitter sighing (xxi, 6; Heb. xxi, 11), and his strange deportment on the death of his wife (xxiv, 16–18). But the symbol of the boiling caldron in chap. xxiv, 3–12, is expressly presented as an *uttered parable*, or symbolical discourse, and the imagery is, accordingly, ideal, and not to be understood of an outward action. The symbolical actions of Isaiah (xx, 2–4) and Jeremiah (xiii, 11; xviii, 1–6; xix, 1–2; xxvii, 1–14, and xliii, 8–13) are, like those of Ezekiel, amply explained in their immediate context.

Other symbolical actions.

Of all the symbolical actions of the prophets the most difficult and disputed example is that of Hosea taking unto himself "a woman of whoredoms and children of whoredoms" (Hosea i, 2), and his loving "a woman beloved of a friend, and an adulteress" (Hosea iii, 1). The great question is: Are these transactions to be understood as mere visional symbols, or as real events in the outward life of the prophet? No one will venture to deny that the language of Hosea most

Hosea's Marriage.

naturally implies that the events were outward and real. He plainly says that Jehovah commanded him to go and marry an adulterous woman, and that he obeyed. He gives the name of the woman and the name of her father, and says that she conceived and bore him a son, whom he named Jezreel, and subsequently she bore him a daughter and another son, to whom he also gave significant names as God directed him. There is no intimation whatever that these events were merely visions of the soul, or that they were to be published to Israel as a purely parabolic discourse. If the account of any symbolical action on record is so explicit and positive as to require a literal interpretation, this surely is one, for its terms are clear, its language is simple, and its general import not difficult to comprehend.

Language implies outward reality.

Whence, then, the difficulties which expositors have felt in its interpretation? It is mainly in the supposition that such a marriage, commanded by God and effected by a holy prophet, was a moral impossibility. A part of the difficulty has also arisen from a misapprehension of the meaning of certain allusions, and the scope of the entire passage. Upon these misapprehensions false assumptions have been based, and false interpretations have naturally followed. Thus, it has been assumed that the three children of the prophet, Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi, were themselves the "children of whoredoms" whom the prophet was to take, and that the prophet's wife herself continued her dissolute life after her marriage with him. Of all this there is nothing in the text. The most simple and natural meaning of "a woman of whoredoms and children of whoredoms" (chap. i, 2) is a woman who is a notable harlot, and who, as such, has begotten children who also follow her lewd practices. If it had been otherwise, and the prophet had been directed to take a pure virgin, the language of our text would have been utterly out of place. For how could Hosea know how and where to select a virgin who would, after her marriage with him, become a harlot? That the prophet's wife continued her lewd practices after her marriage with him is nowhere intimated.

Supposed impossibility based on Misapprehension of Scope and Import.

The straightforward, literal statement that the prophet "went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bare him a son" (ver. 3), is the furthest possible from describing something which occurred only in idea. The sophism of Hengstenberg, that these things took place "actually, but not outwardly,"[1]

[1] Christology of the Old Testament, English translation (Edinb., 1863), vol. i, p. 185. Hengstenberg's whole discussion of this subject, which assumes to be very full and thorough, is a notable exhibition of exegetical dogmatism.

is too glaring to be for a moment entertained. If the things here narrated had no outward reality in the prophet's life, it is an abuse of language to say they actually occurred. All attempts to explain the names Gomer and Diblaim symbolically are manifest failures, and Schmoller is candid enough to admit that "we cannot say that, in themselves, they necessarily demand such an explanation." [1] Gomer may indeed denote *completion*, but no parallel usage justifies the meaning of "completed whoredom," which most English expositors adopt from Aben Ezra and Jerome. The verb גָּמַר means either to come to an end in the sense of *ceasing to exist* (Psa. vii, 10; xii, 2; lxxvii, 9), or to *complete*, or bring to perfection, in a good sense (Psa. lvii, 3; cxxxviii, 8; comp. the Chaldee גְּמַר in Ezra vii, 12). Gesenius and Fürst (Heb. Lex.) suggest the meaning of *coals*, *heat*, or fireglow. The name of Diblaim is also too uncertain to warrant a symbolical interpretation. If we allow its identity with דְּבֵלִים, *fig cakes*, the explanation, "completed whoredom, the daughter of two fig cakes," is sufficiently awkward and far-fetched to discredit the whole interpretation.

Gomer and Diblaim not symbolical names.

Hengstenberg is also guilty of the bold and remarkable assertion that "there exists a multitude of symbolical actions, in regard to which it is undeniable and universally admitted (!) that they took place internally only." [2] He does not deign to inform us what they are, and we may with equal propriety, therefore, affirm that there is not a single instance of a vision, or of a symbolical action, that took place only internally, but that there is in the context something which clearly indicates its visional character. Jeremiah's taking the wine cup of Jehovah's fury and presenting it to the nations (Jer. xxv, 15–33) is not a parallel case, but is metaphorical, as the expression "cup of the wine of this fury" (ver. 15) abundantly shows. This is confirmed by its causal connexion (כִּי, *for*) with verse 14, and by the whole tone and spirit of the passage, which is highly figurative; see, especially, verses 27–31. The same is true of Zech. xi, 4–14, where the prophet by inspiration identifies himself with the Lord, and describes no vision, or internal transaction, but a highly figurative account of the relations of the Lord and Israel. The breaking of the staves, Beauty and Bands, was the Lord's doing, and not that of the prophet. Much more scientific and trustworthy is the procedure of Cowles, who collates all the Old Testament examples bearing on this point, and exhibits "a clear line of distinction drawn between

Hengstenberg's unwarrantable assertion.

[1] Commentary on Hosea (Lange's Biblework), in loco.

[2] Christology, vol. i, p. 186.

the things seen and shown in vision only, and those which were done in outward life for symbolic or other purposes. These distinctions," he observes, "lie not mainly—indeed scarcely at all—in the nature of the things as convenient to be done, or as impossible, but in the very *form* of the statements. In other words, the Lord has been specially careful to leave us in no doubt as to what was actually *done* by his prophets on the one hand, and what was only *seen* by them in vision on the other." [1]

The facts as stated not insupposable.

The prophet Hosea was not commanded to go and rehearse a parable before the people, nor to relate what occurred to him in vision, but to perform certain actions. The time necessary for his marriage, and the birth of the three children of Gomer, need have been no greater than that in which Isaiah was required to walk naked and barefoot for a sign (Isa. xx, 3). The names of the three children are symbolical of certain purposes and plans of God in his dealings with the house of Israel, but there is no hint that these children were at all given to licentiousness. Their names point to coming judgments, as did the name of Isaiah's son (Isa. viii, 3), but those symbolical names are no disparagement of the character of the persons who bore them. As long as Gomer was no man's lawful wife, her marriage to Hosea, even though she had become noted as a harlot, and had thus begotten "children of whoredoms," involved no breach of law. The law governing a priest's marriage (Lev. xxi, 7–15), and which even prohibited his marrying a widow, did not apply to a prophet more than to any other man in Israel. That a prophet should marry a harlot, and take her children with her, was indeed surprising, and calculated to excite wonder and astonishment; but to excite such wonder, and deeply impress it on the popular heart, was the very purpose of the whole transaction. We cannot conceive how the actions here recorded could have been made signs and wonders in Israel (comp. Isa. viii, 18), or have been at all impressive, if they were known to have never occurred. In that case they would have been either ridiculed as a silly fancy, or denounced as an utter falsehood. Their real occurrence, however, would have been a sign and a wonder too striking to be trifled with; but it is not probable that when the people of the whole land had grievously committed whoredom away from Jehovah (chap. i, 2) their moral sense would have been so shocked at these actions of a prophet as many modern critics imagine.

The main purport and scope of the passage may be indicated as follows: Hosea is commanded to marry a harlot "because the land

[1] Notes on the Minor Prophets. Dissertation i, p. 413. New York, 1866.

has grievously committed whoredom away from Jehovah." The adulterous woman would thus represent idolatrous Israel, whose sins are so frequently set forth under this figure. Scope of passage indicated. No particular historical period is indicated, none need be assumed. All question here as to when Jehovah was married to Israel, or what Israel was before, and what after such marriage, only tends to confuse and obscure the main purport of this Scripture, into which a consideration of such questions does not enter. The marriage of the prophet to a harlot was a striking symbol of Jehovah's relation to a people to whom it would be supposed he would have utter aversion. Yet of that people, so guilty of spiritual adultery, will Jehovah beget a holy seed, and the three symbolical names, Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi, denote the severe measures, stated in the passage itself, by which the redemption of Israel must be accomplished. Jezreel may have a double reference, one local, taken from the well-known valley of this name where Jehu wrought his bloody deeds (2 Kings x, 1–7); the other etymological (as the word denotes "God sows," or, "God will sow"), and indicating that the very judgments by which the kingdom of the house of Israel was overthrown were a sowing of the seed from which should spring a regenerated nation. The names Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi symbolize other forms of judgment. By his unpitying chastisements (Lo-ruhamah) and the utter rejection of them as a people (Lo-ammi) will he secure the redemption of that vast multitude mentioned in verses 10, 11, and chapter ii, 1 (Heb. ii, 1–3), whose glory and triumph will give new significance to the "day of Jezreel," and change the name of Lo-ruhamah to Ruhamah (compassionated), and Lo-ammi to Ammi (my people). This view fully harmonizes with the language of chapter ii, 22, 23, and gives a unity and definiteness to the whole of the first two chapters of Hosea. The oracle of chapter ii, is, accordingly, to be understood as Jehovah's appeal to Israel. It is addressed to the "children of whoredoms," who are called on to plead with their mother (ii, 2; Heb. ii, 4). It consists of complaint, threatening, and promises, and from verse 14 on to the end of the chapter (Heb., verses 16–25) indicates the process by which Jehovah will woo and marry that mother of profligate children, making for her "the valley of Achor as a door of hope" (ver. 15),[1] and thereby The symbolical Names.

[1] Achor (עָכוֹר) means *troubler*, or *troubling*, and is here used in allusion to the events recorded in Josh. vii, 24–26. In the valley of Achor, Achan was punished for his crimes, and the ban was thereby removed from Israel. "Through the name *Achor* this valley became a memorial how the Lord restores his favour to the Church after the expiation of the guilt by the punishment of the transgressor. And this divine

accomplishing her redemption. To emphasize this most wonderful prophecy and promise the marriage of Hosea and Gomer served as a most impressive sign.

Hosea, chap. iii, another Symbolical act with similar purport.

The third chapter of Hosea records another symbolical action of this prophet, by which it is shown, in another form, how Jehovah would reform and regenerate the children of Israel. Who this adulterous woman beloved by a friend (ver. 1) was, we are not told, and conjectures are idle. The supposition of many, that she was identical with Gomer, accords with the apocalyptic habit of repeating symbolical prophecies under various forms. So this prophet may have repeated the record of the great symbolical act of his life so as to exhibit it from another point of view. The supposition, however, is unnecessary. In the long life and ministry of Hosea (comp. chap. i, 1) there was room for several events of this kind, and we most naturally assume that in the meantime his former wife, Gomer, had died. In the very brief record here made there was no space for such details. Hosea's loving this woman, buying her according to oriental custom, and placing her apart for many days, are explained as a symbol of Israel's exile and dispersion until the appointed time of restitution should come. All that is here said about Israel's remaining many days without king, sacrifices, and images was amply fulfilled during the Assyrian exile. No traces of idolatry or spiritual whoredom remained in Israel or Judah after the restoration which took place under Cyrus and his successors. The reason why so many expositors have supposed that this chapter refers to another and later exile arises from failure to note the habit of prophetic discourse to repeat the same things under different symbols. This error has misled many into the notion that the adulterous woman of chapter iii, must be identified with the Gomer of chapter i. As in the prophecies of Daniel we find the composite image of chapter ii, and the four beasts of chapter vii, only different symbols of the same events, and the vision of the ram and he-goat, in chapter viii, going over a part of the same ground again, so here we should understand that Hosea, at different periods of his life, depicted by entirely different symbolic actions different phases of

Repetition of symbols.

mode of procedure will be repeated in all its essential characteristics. The Lord will make the valley of troubling a door of hope; that is, he will so expiate the sins of his Church and cover them with his grace, that the covenant of fellowship with him will no more be rent asunder by them; or he will so display his grace to the sinners that compassion will manifest itself even in wrath, and through judgment and mercy the pardoned sinners will be more and more firmly and inwardly united to him."—Keil on Hosea, in loco.

the same great facts. Similar repetition abounds in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and the Apocalypse of John.

These actions of Hosea, then, according to all sound laws of grammatico-historical interpretation, are to be understood as having actually occurred in the life of the prophet, and are to be classed along with other actions which we have termed symbolico-typical. Such actions, as we have observed before, combine essential elements of both symbol and type, and serve to illustrate at once the kinship and the difference between them. Serving as signs and visible images of unseen facts or truths, they are symbolical; but being at the same time representative actions of an intelligent agent, actually and outwardly performed, and pointing especially to things to come, they are typical. Hence the propriety of designating them by the compound name symbolico-typical. And it is worthy of note that every instance of such actions is accompanied by an explanation of its import, more or less detailed.

The miracles of our Lord may not improperly be spoken of as symbolico-typical. They were *σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα, signs and wonders*, and they all, without exception, have a moral and spiritual significance. The cleansing of the leper symbolized the power of Christ to heal the sinner, and so all his miracles of love and mercy bear the character of redemptive acts, and are typically prophetical of what he is evermore doing in his reign of grace. The stilling of the tempest, the walking on the sea, and the opening of the eyes of the blind furnish suggestive lessons of divine grace and power, as some of the noblest hymns of the Church attest. The miracle of the water made wine, says Trench, "may be taken as the sign and symbol of all which Christ is evermore doing in the world, ennobling all that he touches, making saints out of sinners, angels out of men, and in the end heaven out of earth, a new paradise of God out of the old wilderness of the world."[1] Hengstenberg observes that Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as predicted in Zech. ix, 10, "was a symbolical action, the design and purport of which were to assert his royal dignity, and to set forth in a living picture the true nature of his person and kingdom, in opposition to the false notions of both friends and foes. Apart, therefore, from the prophecy, the entry had its own peculiar meaning, as, in fact, was the case with every act of Christ and every event of his life."[2]

Our Lord's miracles symbolical.

[1] Notes on the Miracles of our Lord, p. 98. New York, 1858.

[2] Christology of the Old Testament, vol. iii, p. 375. Edinb., 1863.

CHAPTER XII.

SYMBOLIC NUMBERS, NAMES, AND COLOURS.

EVERY observant reader of the Bible has had his attention arrested at times by what seemed a mystical or symbolical use of numbers. The numbers three, four, seven, ten, and twelve, especially, have a significance worthy of most careful study. Certain well-known proper names, as Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, are also used in a mystic sense, and the colours red, black, and white are understood to be so associated with the ideas respectively of bloodshed, evil, and purity as to have become emblematic of those ideas. The only valid method of ascertaining the symbolical meaning and usage of such numbers, names, and colours in the Scriptures, is by an ample collation and study of the passages where they occur. The hermeneutical process is therefore essentially the same as that by which we ascertain the *usus loquendi* of words, and the province of hermeneutics is, not to furnish an elaborate discussion of the subject, but to exhibit the principles and methods by which such a discussion should be carried out.[1]

Process of ascertaining Symbolism of Numbers, etc.

SYMBOLICAL NUMBERS.

The number one, as being the first, the startingpoint, the parent, and source of all numbers, the representative of unity, might naturally be supposed to possess some mystical significance, and yet there appears no evidence that it is ever used in any such sense in the Scriptures. It has a notable emphasis in that watchword of Israelitish faith, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is ONE JEHOVAH" (Deut. vi, 4; comp. Mark xii, 29, 32; 1 Cor. viii, 4), but neither here nor elsewhere is the number used in any other than its literal

[1] On the symbolism of numbers see Bähr, Symbolik des mosaischen Cultus, vol. i, (1874), pp. 185–282; Kurtz, Ueber die symbolische Dignität der Zahlen an der Stiftshütte, in the Studien und Kritiken for 1844, pp. 315–370; Lämmert, Zur Revision der biblischen Zahlensymbolik, in the Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie for 1864, pp. 1–49; and Engelhardt, Einiges über symbolische Zahlen, in the same periodical for 1866, pp. 301–332; Kliefoth, Die Zahlensymbolik der heiligen Schrift, in Dieckhoff und Kliefoth's Theologische Zeitschrift for 1862, pp. 1–89, 341–453, and 509–623; Stuart's Excursus (appropriating largely from Bähr) on the Symbolical Use of Numbers in the Apocalypse, in his Commentary on the Apocalypse, vol. ii, pp. 409–434; White, Symbolical Numbers of Scripture (Edinb., 1868).

sense. The number three, however, is employed in such relations as to suggest that it is especially the number of divine fullness in unity. Bähr seems altogether too fanciful when he says: "It lies in the very nature of the number three, that is, in its relation to the two preceding numbers one and two, that it forms in the progression of numbers the first conclusion (Abschluss); for the one is first made a number by being followed by the two, but the two as such represents separation, difference, contrast, and this becomes cancelled by the number three, so that three is in fact the first finished, true, and complete unity."[1] But he goes on to say that every true unity comprises a trinity, and instances the familiar triads, beginning, middle, and end; past, present, and future; under, midst, and upper; and he cites from many heathen sources to show the mystic significance that everywhere attached to the number three. He also cites from the Scripture such triads as the three men who appeared to Abraham (Gen. xviii, 2), the three forefathers of the children of Israel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod. iii, 6), the three sons of Noah, by whom the postdiluvian world was peopled (Gen. ix, 19), the three constituent parts of the universe, heaven, earth, and sea (Exod. xx, 11; Psa. cxlvi, 6), the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, used in the ceremonial purification (Lev. xiv, 6; Num. xix, 6), the threefold cord that is not quickly broken (Eccl. iv, 12), and other less noticeable examples. More important and conspicuous, however, as exhibiting a sacredness in the number three, are those texts which associate it immediately with the divine name. These are the thrice-repeated benediction of Num. vi, 24–26, or threefold *putting the name* of Jehovah (ver. 27) upon the children of Israel; the threefold name in the formula of baptism (Matt. xxviii, 19), and the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. xiii, 14); and the *trisagion* of Isa. vi, 3, and Rev. iv, 8, accompanied in the latter passage by the three divine titles, Lord, God, and Almighty, and the additional words "who was, and who is, and who is to come." From all this it would appear, as Stuart[2] has observed, "that the doctrine of a Trinity in the Godhead lies much deeper than the New-Platonic philosophy, to which so many have been accustomed to refer it. An original impression of the character in question plainly overspread all the ancient oriental world . . . That many philosophistic and superstitious conceits have been mixed with it, in process of time, proves nothing against the general fact as stated. And this being admitted, we cease to think it strange that such distinction and significancy have been given in the Scriptures to the number three."

The number Three.

[1] Symbolik des mosaischen Cultus, p. 205.

[2] Commentary on Apocalypse, vol. ii, pp. 419, 420.

If its peculiar usage in connexion with the divine Name gives mystical significance to the number three, and entitles it to be called "the number of God," the use of the number four in the Scriptures would in like manner entitle it to be called "the number of the world," or of the visible creation. Thus we have the four winds of heaven (Jer. xlix, 36; Ezek. xxxvii, 9; Dan. vii, 2; viii, 8; Zech. ii, 6; vi, 5; Matt. xxiv, 31; Mark xiii, 27; Rev. vii, 1), the four corners or extremities of the earth (Isa. xi, 12; Ezek. vii, 2; Rev. vii, 1; xx, 8), corresponding, doubtless, with the four points of the compass, east, west, north, and south (1 Chron. ix, 24; Psa. cvii, 3; Luke xiii, 29), and the four seasons. Noticeable also are the four living creatures in Ezek. i, 5, each with four faces, four wings, four hands, and connected with four wheels; and in Zechariah the four horns (i, 18), the four smiths (i, 20), and the four chariots (vi, 1).

Four.

The number seven, being the sum of four and three, may naturally be supposed to symbolize some mystical union of God with the world, and accordingly, may be called the sacred number of the covenant between God and his creation. The hebdomad, or period of seven days, is so essentially associated with the record of creation (Gen. ii, 2, 3; Exod. xx, 8–11), that from the beginning a sevenfold division of time was recognized among the ancient nations. In the Scripture it is peculiarly a ritual number. In establishing his covenant with Abraham God ordained that seven days must pass after the birth of a child, and then, upon the eighth day, he must be circumcised (Gen. xvii, 12; comp. Lev. xii, 2, 3). The passover feast continued seven days (Exod. xii, 15). The feast of Pentecost was held seven weeks after the day of the wave offering (Lev. xxiii, 15). The feast of trumpets occurred in the seventh month (Lev. xxiii, 24), and seven times seven years brought round the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv, 8). The blood of the sin offering was sprinkled seven times before the Lord (Lev. iv, 6). The ceremonial cleansing of the leper required that he be sprinkled seven times with blood and seven times with oil, that he tarry abroad outside of his tent seven days (Lev. xiv. 7, 8; xvi, 27), and that his house also be sprinkled seven times (Lev. xiv, 51). Contact with a dead body and other kinds of ceremonial uncleanness required a purification of seven days (Num. xix, 11; Lev. xv, 13, 24). And so the idea of covenant relations and obligations seems to be associated with this sacred number. Jehovah confirmed his word to Joshua and Israel, when for seven days seven priests with seven trumpets compassed Jericho, and on the seventh day compassed the city seven times (Josh. vi, 13–15). The golden candlestick had seven

Seven.

lamps (Exod. xxxviii, 23). The seven churches, seven stars, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven thunders, and seven last plagues of the Apocalypse are of similar mystical significance.

Ten.

The number ten completes the list of primary numbers, and is made the basis of all further numeration. Hence, it is naturally regarded as the number of rounded fulness or completeness. The Hebrew word for ten, עֶשֶׂר, is believed to favour this idea. Gesenius (Lex.) traces it to a root which conveys the idea of *conjunction*, and observes that "etymologists agree in deriving this form from the conjunction of the ten fingers." Fürst adopts the same fundamental idea, and defines the word as if it were expressive of "*union*, association; hence *multitude, heap, multiplicity*" (Heb. Lex). And this general idea is sustained by the usage of the number. Thus the Decalogue, the totality and substance of the whole Torah, or Law, is spoken of as *the ten words* Exod. xxxiv, 28; Deut. iv, 13; x, 4); ten elders constitute an ancient Israelitish court (Ruth iv, 2); ten princes represent the tribes of Israel (Josh. xxii, 14); ten virgins go forth to meet the bridegroom (Matt. xxv, 1). And, in a more general way, ten times is equivalent to many times (Gen. xxxi, 7, 41; Job xix, 3), ten women means many women (Lev. xxvi, 26), ten sons many sons (1 Sam. i, 8), ten mighty ones are many mighty ones (Eccles. vii, 19), and the ten horns of Dan. vii, 7, 24; Rev. xii, 3; xiii, 1; xvii, 12, may fittingly symbolize many kings.[1]

Twelve.

The symbolical use of the number twelve in Scripture appears to have fundamental allusion to the twelve tribes of Israel. Thus Moses erects "twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel" (Exod. xxiv, 4), and there were twelve stones in the breastplate of the high priest (Exod. xxviii, 21), twelve cakes of showbread (Lev. xxiv, 5), twelve bullocks, twelve rams, twelve lambs, and twelve kids for offerings of dedication (Num. vii, 87), and many other like instances. In the New Testament we have the twelve apostles, twelve times twelve thousand are sealed out of the tribes of Israel, twelve thousand from each tribe (Rev. vii, 4–8), and the New Jerusalem has twelve gates, bearing the names of the twelve tribes, and guarded by twelve angels (Rev. xxi, 12), and its wall has twelve foundations, bearing the twelve names of the apostles (xxi, 14). Twelve, then, may properly be called the mystical number of God's chosen people.

It is thus by collation and comparison of the peculiar uses of these numbers that we can arrive at any safe conclusion as to their

[1] Compare Wemyss, Clavis Symbolica, under the word Ten, and Bähr, Symbolik, vol. i, pp. 223, 224.

symbolical import. But allowing that they have such import as the foregoing examples indicate, we must not suppose that they thereby necessarily lose their literal and proper meaning. The number ten, as shown above, and some few instances of the number seven (Psa. xii, 6; lxxix, 12; Prov. xxvi, 16; Isa. iv, 4; Dan. iv, 16), authorize us to say that they are used sometimes indefinitely in the sense of *many*. But when, for example, it is written that seven priests, with seven trumpets, compassed Jericho on the seventh day seven times (Josh. vi, 13–15), we understand the statements in their literal sense. These things were done just so many times, but the symbolism of the sevens suggests that in this signal overthrow of Jericho God was confirming his covenant and promises to give into the hand of his chosen people their enemies and the land they occupied (comp. Exod. xxiii, 31; Josh. ii, 9, 24; vi, 2). And so the sounding of the seven trumpets of the Apocalypse completed the mystery of God as declared to his prophets (Rev. x, 7), so that when the seventh angel sounded great voices in heaven said: "The kingdom of the world is become that of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. xii, 15).

Symbolical does not always exclude literal sense.

The "time and times and dividing (or half) of a time" (Dan. vii, 25; xii, 7; Rev. xii, 13) is commonly and with reason believed to stand for three years and a half, a time denoting a year. A comparison of verses 6 and 12 of Rev. xii shows this period to be the same as twelve hundred and sixty days, or exactly three and a half years, reckoning three hundred and sixty days to a year. But as this number is in every case used to denote a period of woe and disaster to the Church or people of God (Rev. xi, 2), we may regard it as symbolical. It is a divided seven (comp. Dan. ix, 27) as if suggesting the thought of a broken covenant, an interrupted sacrifice, a triumph of the enemy of God.

Time, times, and half a time.

The twelve hundred and sixty days are also equivalent to forty-two months (Rev. xi, 2, 3; xiii, 5), reckoning thirty days to a month, and, thus used, it is probably to be regarded, not as an exact designation of just so many days, but as a round number readily reckoned and remembered, and approximating the exact length of the period denoted with sufficient nearness. In Dan. viii, 14 we have the peculiar expression "two thousand and three hundred evening mornings," which some explain as meaning so many days, in allusion to Gen. i, 5, where evening and morning constitute one day. Others, however, understand so many morning and evening sacrifices, which would require half the number of days (eleven hundred and fifty). This latter is the more

Forty-two months.

preferable view, and the number 1150 should be compared with the 1290 and 1335 of Dan. xii, 11, 12. All these numbers approximate the period of three and a half years, and may possibly have had relation to facts no longer known to us. But the noticeable enigmatical differences in these related numbers may have been designed, in apocalyptic symbolism, to suggest that the "time, times, and dividing of a time" were not to be understood with mathematical precision.

Forty.

The number forty designates in so many places the duration of a penal judgment, either forty days or forty years, that it may be regarded as symbolic of a period of judgment. The forty days of the flood (Gen. vii, 4, 12, 17), the forty years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness (Num. xiv, 34), the forty stripes with which a convicted criminal was to be beaten (Deut. xxv, 3), the forty years of Egypt's desolation (Ezek. xxix, 11, 12), and the forty days and nights during which Moses, Elijah, and Jesus fasted (Exod. xxiv, 28; 1 Kings xix, 8; Matt. iv, 2), all favour this idea. But there is no reason to suppose that in all these cases the number forty is not also used in its proper and literal sense. The symbolism, if any, arises from the association of the number with a period of punishment or trial.

Seventy.

The number seventy is also noticeable as being that of the totality of Jacob's sons (Gen. xlvi, 27; Exod. i, 5; Deut. x, 22) and of the elders of Israel (Exod. xxiv, 1, 9; Num. xi, 24); the Jews were doomed to seventy years of Babylonian exile (Jer. xxv, 11, 12; Dan. ix, 2); seventy weeks distinguish one of Daniel's most important prophecies (Dan. ix, 24), and our Lord appointed seventy other disciples besides the twelve (Luke x, 1). Auberlen observes: "The number seventy is ten multiplied by seven; the human is here moulded and fixed by the divine. For this reason the seventy years of exile are a symbolical sign of the time during which the power of the world would, according to God's will, triumph over Israel, during which it would execute the divine judgments on God's people." [1]

Prophetic designations of time.

We have already seen (p. 278), in discussing the symbolical actions of Ezekiel, that the four hundred and thirty days of his prostration formed a symbolical period in allusion to the four hundred and thirty (390+40) years of the Egyptian bondage (Exod. xii, 40). Like the number forty, as shown above, it was associated with a period of discipline and sorrow. Each day of the prophet's prostration represented a year of Israel's humiliation and judgment (Ezek. iv, 6), as the forty days

[1] The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, Eng. Trans., p. 134. Edinb., 1856.

during which the spies searched the land of Canaan were typical of the years of Israel's wandering and wasting in the wilderness (Num. xiv, 33, 34).

The year-day theory.

Here it is in place to examine the so-called "year-day theory" of prophetic interpretation, so prevalent among modern expositors.[1] Upon the statement of the two passages just cited from Numbers and Ezekiel, and also upon supposed necessities of apocalyptic interpretation, a large number of modern writers on prophecy have advanced the theory that the word *day*, or *days*, is to be understood in prophetic designations of time as denoting years. This theory has been applied especially to the "time, times, and dividing of a time" in Dan. vii, 25, xii, 7, and Rev. xii, 14; the twelve hundred and sixty days of Rev. xi, 3; xii, 6; and also by many to the two thousand three hundred days of Dan. viii, 14, and the twelve hundred and ninety and thirteen hundred and thirty-five days of Dan. xii, 11, 12. The forty and two months of Rev. xi, 2, and xiii, 5, are, according to this theory, to be multiplied by thirty (42×30=1260), and then the result in days is to be understood as so many years. After the like manner, the time, times, and a half, are first understood as three years and a half, and then the years are multiplied by three hundred and sixty, a round number for the days of a year, and the result (1260) is understood as designating, not so many days, but so many years.

A theory so far reaching and fundamental should have most valid support.

If this is a correct theory of interpreting the designations of prophetic time, it is obvious that it is a most important one. It is necessarily so farreaching in its practical results as fundamentally to affect one's whole plan and process of exposition. Such a theory, surely, ought to be supported by the most convincing and incontrovertible reasons. And yet, upon the most careful examination, we do not find that it has any sufficient warrant in the Scripture, and the expositions of its advocates are not of a character likely to commend it to the critical mind. Against it we urge the five following considerations:

Has no support in Num. xiv and Ezek. iv.

1. This theory derives no valid support from the passages in Numbers and Ezekiel already referred to. In Num. xiv, 33, 34, Jehovah's word to Israel simply states that they must suffer for their iniquities forty years, "in the

[1] See on this subject Stuart's article on the Designation of Time in the Apocalypse in the American Biblical Repository for Jan., 1835. Also a reply to the same by Dr. Allen in the same periodical for July, 1840. Compare also Cowles' Dissertation on the subject at the end of his Commentary on Daniel. Elliott's laboured argument on this subject (Horæ Apocalypticæ, vol. iii, pp. 260–298) is mainly a series of presumptions.

number of the days which ye searched the land, forty days, a day for the year, a day for the year." There is no possibility of misunderstanding this. The spies were absent forty days searching the land of Canaan (Num. xiii, 25), and when they returned they brought back a bad report of the country, and spread disaffection, murmuring, and rebellion through the whole congregation of Israel (xiv, 2–4). Thereupon the divine sentence of judgment was pronounced upon that generation, and they were condemned to "graze (רָעִים, *pasture, feed*) in the wilderness forty years" (xiv, 33). Here then is certainly no ground on which to base the universal proposition that, in prophetic designations of time, a day means a year. The passage is exceptional and explicit, and the words are used in a strictly literal sense; the days evidently mean days, and the years mean years. The same is true in every particular of the days and years mentioned in Ezek. iv, 5, 6. The days of his prostration were literal days, and they were typical of years, as is explicitly stated. But to derive from this symbolico-typical action of Ezekiel a hermeneutical principle or law of universal application, namely, that days in prophecy mean years, would be a most unwarrantable procedure.

Not sustained by Prophetic Analogy.

2. If the two passages now noticed were expressive of a universal law, we certainly would expect to find it sustained and capable of illustration by examples of fulfilled prophecy. But examples bearing on this point are overwhelmingly against the theory in question. God's word to Noah was: "Yet seven days, I will cause it to rain upon the land forty days and forty nights" (Gen. vii, 4). Did any one ever imagine these days were symbolical of years? Or will it be pretended that the mention of nights along with days removes the prophecy from the category of those scriptures which have a mystical import? God's word to Abraham was that his seed should be afflicted in a foreign land four hundred years (Gen. xv, 13). Must we multiply these years by three hundred and sixty to know the real time intended? Isaiah prophesied that Ephraim should be broken within threescore and five years (Isa. vii, 8); but who ever dreamed that this must be resolved into days in order to find the period of Ephraim's fall? Was it ever sagely believed that the three years of Moab's glory, referred to in Isa. xvi, 14, must be multiplied by three hundred and sixty in order to find the import of what Jehovah had spoken concerning it? Was it by such mathematical calculation as this that Daniel "understood in the books the number of the years, which was a word of Jehovah to Jeremiah (comp. Jer. xxv, 12) the prophet, to complete as to the desolations of Jerusalem seventy

years" (Dan. ix, 2)? Or is it supposable that the seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy were ever intended to be manipulated by such calculations? In short, this theory breaks down utterly when an appeal is taken to the analogy of prophetic scriptures. If the time, times, and a half of Dan. vii, 25 means three and a half years multiplied by three hundred and sixty, that is, twelve hundred and sixty years, then the seven times of Dan. iv, 16, 32, should mean seven times three hundred and sixty, or two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Or if in one prophecy of the future, twelve hundred and sixty days must, without any accompanying qualification, or any statement to that effect in the context, be understood as denoting so many years, then the advocates of such a theory must show pertinent and valid reason why the forty days of Jonah's prophecy against Nineveh (Jon. iii, 4) are not to be also understood as denoting forty years.

Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks not parallel.

3. The year-day theory is thought to have support in Daniel's prophecy of the *seventy weeks* (Dan. ix, 24–27). But that prophecy says not a word about days or years, but seventy *heptads*, or *sevens* (שָׁבֻעִים). The position and gender of the word indicate its peculiar significance. It nowhere else occurs in the masculine except in Dan. x, 2, 3, where it is expressly defined as denoting *heptads of days* (שָׁבֻעִים יָמִים). Unaccompanied by any such limiting word, and standing in such an emphatic position at the beginning of ver. 24, we have reason to infer at once that it involves some mystical import. When, now, we observe that it is a Messianic oracle, granted to Daniel when his mind was full of meditations upon Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy years of Jewish exile (ver. 2), and in answer to his ardent supplications, we most naturally understand the seventy heptads as heptads of years. But this admission furnishes slender support to such a sweeping theory as would logically bring all prophetic designations of time to the principle that days mean years.

Days nowhere properly mean Years.

4. It has been argued that in such passages as Judg. xvii, 10; 1 Sam. ii, 19; 2 Chron. xxi, 19, and Isa. xxxii, 10, the word *days* is used to denote *years*, and "if this word be sometimes thus used in Scripture in places not prophetic, why should it not be thus employed in prophetic passages?"[1] But a critical examination of those passages will show that the word for *days* is not really used in the sense of years. In Judg. xvii, 10, Micah says to the Levite: "Dwell with me, and be to me for a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten (pieces) of silver *for*

[1] See Allen's article "On the Designations of Time in Daniel and John," in The American Biblical Repository, for July, 1840, p. 39.

the days" (לְיָמִים), that is, for the days that he should dwell with him as a priest. In 1 Sam. ii, 19, it is said that Samuel's mother made him a little robe, and brought it up to him *from days to days* in her going up along with her husband to offer the sacrifice *of the days.*" Here the reference is to the particular days of going up to the tabernacle to worship and sacrifice, and the exact sense is not brought out by the common version, "year by year" or "yearly." They may have gone up several times during the year at the days of the great national feasts. And this appears from a comparison of 1 Sam. i, 3 and 7, where, in the first place, it is said that Elkanah went up *from days to days*, and in ver. 7, "so he did *year by year.*" That is, he went up three times a year according to the law (Exod. xxiii, 14–17) "from days to days," as the well-known national feastdays came round; and his wife generally accompanied him. 2 Chron. xxi, 19 is literally: "And it came to pass at days from days (i. e., after several days), and about the time of the going out (expiration) of the end, at two days, his bowels went out," etc.[1] Similarly, Isa. xxxii, 10: "Days above a year shall ye be troubled," etc. That is, more than a year shall ye be troubled.[2] The most that can be said of such a use of the word days, is, that it is used indefinitely in a proverbial and idiomatic way; but such a usage by no means justifies the broad proposition that a day means a year.

5. The advocates of the year-day theory rest their strongest argument, however, upon the necessity of such a theory for what they regard the true explanation of certain prophecies. They affirm that the three times and a half of Dan. vii, 25, and the twelve hundred and sixty days of Rev. xii, 6, and their parallels, are incapable of a literal interpretation. And so, carrying the predictions both of Daniel and John down into the history of modern Europe for explanation, most of these writers understand the twelve hundred and sixty year-days as designating the period of the Roman Papacy. Mr. William Miller, famous in the last generation for the sensation he produced, and the large following he had, adopted a scheme of interpreting not only the twelve hundred and sixty days, but also the twelve hundred and ninety, and the thirteen hundred and thirty-five (of Dan. xii, 11, 12), so that he ascertained and published with great assurance that the coming of Christ would take place in October, 1843. We have lived to see his theories thoroughly exploded, and yet there have not been wanting others who have adopted his hermeneutical principles, and named A. D. 1866 and

Disproved by repeated Failures in interpretation.

[1] See Keil and Bertheau on Chronicles, in loco.

[2] See Alexander on Isaiah, in loco.

A. D. 1870 as "the time of the end." A theory which is so destitute of scriptural analogy and support as we have seen above, and presumes to rest on such a slender showing of divine authority, is on those grounds alone to be suspected; but when it has again and again proved to be false and misleading in its application, we may safely reject it, as furnishing no valid principle or rule in a true science of hermeneutics.[1] Those who have supposed it to be necessary for the exposition of apocalyptic prophecies, should begin to feel that their systems of interpretation are in error.

The thousand years of Rev. xx.

The duration of the thousand years, or the millenial reign, mentioned in Rev. xx, 2–7, has been variously estimated. Most of those who advocate the year-day theory have singularly agreed to understand this thousand years literally. With them days mean years, and times mean years, to be resolved into three hundred and sixty days each, but the thousand years of the Apocalypse are literally and exactly a thousand years! Many, however, understand this number as denoting an indefinitely long period, and some have not scrupled to apply to it the theory of a day for a year, and multiplying by three hundred and sixty, estimate the length of the millenium at three hundred and sixty thousand years. But in this case we have no analogy, no real parallel, in other parts of scripture. Allen himself candidly admits that "there is nothing in the customary use of the phrase *a thousand*, in other places, which will determine its import in the Book of Revelation. The probability of its being used there definitely or indefinitely must be determined by examining the place itself, and from the nature of the case."[2] This is a very safe and proper rule, and it may well be added that, as we have found the number ten to symbolize the general idea of *fulness, totality, completeness*, so not improbably the number one thousand may stand as the symbolic number of manifold fulness, the rounded æon of Messianic triumph, (*ὁ αἰὼν μέλλων*), during which he shall abolish all rule and all authority and power, and put all his enemies under his feet (1 Cor. xv, 24, 25), and bring in the fulness (*τὸ πλήρωμα*) of both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. xi, 12, 25).

[1] It may be said that Bengel's long-ago exploded theory of explaining apocalyptic designations of time is worthy of as much credence as this more popular year-day theory. In his Erklärten Offenbarung Johannis (1740) he takes the mystic number 666 (Rev. xiii, 18) for his startingpoint, and dividing it by 42 months, he makes a prophetic month equal 15⅞ years. His prophetic days were of corresponding length, amounting to about half a year, and his scheme fixed the end of all things in A.D. 1836. In favour of Bengel it may be said that he started with a number which is propounded as a riddle, which is more than we can say in favour of these other theorists.

[2] American Biblical Repository, July, 1840, p. 47.

Symbolical Names.

A symbolical use of proper names is apparent in such passages as Rev. xi, 8, where the great city, in which the bodies of the slain witnesses were exposed, and "where also their Lord was crucified," is called, spiritually,[1] Sodom and Egypt. Evidently this wicked city, whether we understand Jerusalem or Rome, is so designated because its moral corruptions and bitter persecuting spirit were like those of Sodom and Egypt, both famous in Jewish history for these ungodly qualities. In a similar way Isaiah likens Judah and Jerusalem to Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa. i, 9, 10). Compare also Jer. xxiii, 14. In Ezek. xvi, 44–59, the abominations of Jerusalem are made to appear loathsome by comparison and contrast with Samaria on one side and Sodom on the other. Sodom and Egypt.

In like manner "Babylon the great," is evidently a symbolical name in Rev. xiv, 8; xvi, 19; xvii, 5; xviii, 2, etc. Whether the name is used to denote the same city as that called Sodom and Egypt in chapter xi, 8, or some other city, its mystical designation is to be explained, like that of Sodom and Egypt, as arising from Jewish historical associations with Babylon, the great city of the exile. That city could, in Jewish thought, be associated only with oppression and woe, and their antipathy to it as a persecuting power is well expressed in Psa. cxxxvii. The opposite of Babylon, the Harlot, in the Apocalypse, is Jerusalem, the Bride (Rev. xxi, 9, 10). So, too, in the psalm just referred to, the opposite of Babylon, with its rivers and willows, was Jerusalem and Mount Zion. And the careful student will note that, as one of the seven angels said to the prophet, "Come hither," and then "carried him away in spirit into a wilderness" and showed him the mystic Babylon, the Harlot (Rev. xvii, 1–3), so also one of the same class of angels addressed him with like words, and then "carried him away in spirit into a mountain great and high," and showed him the holy Jerusalem, the Bride (chap. xxi, 9, 10). And if the Bride denotes the true Church of the people and saints of the Most High, doubtless the Harlot represents the false and apostate Church, historically guilty of the blood of saints and martyrs. Which great city best represents that harlot—Rome, which truly has been a bitter persecutor, or Jerusalem, so often called a harlot by the prophets, and charged by Jesus himself as guilty of "all the righteous blood poured out upon the land, from the blood of Abel, the righteous, Babylon and Jerusalem.

[1] Πνευματικῶς, i. e., by a mental discernment intensified and exalted by a divine inspiration which enables one to see things according to their real and spiritual nature.

unto the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachiah" (Matt. xxiii, 35)—where also their Lord and ours was crucified—each expositor will determine for himself.

Return to Egypt.

The name of Egypt is used symbolically in Hos. viii, 13, where Ephraim is sentenced, on account of sin, to "return to Egypt." The name had become proverbial as the land of bondage (Exod. xx, 2), and Moses had threatened such a return in his warnings and admonitions addressed to Israel (Deut. xxviii, 68). In Hos. ix, 3, this return to Egypt is, by the Hebrew poetic parallelism of the passage, made equivalent to eating unclean things in the land of Asshur. Hence the Assyrian exile is viewed as another Egyptian bondage.

David and Elijah.

The names of David and Elijah are used after the same symbolical manner to designate, prophetically, the prince Messiah and the prophet John the Baptist. In Ezek. xxxiv, 23, 24, Jehovah declares that he will set his servant David for a shepherd over his people, and for a prince among them. Here, assuredly, the language cannot be taken literally, and no one will contend that the historical David is to appear again in fulfilment of this prediction. Compare Ezek. xxxvii, 24; Jer. xxx, 9; Hos. iii, 5. So, too, the prophecy of the coming of Elijah in Mal. iv, 5, was fulfilled in John the Baptist (Matt. xi, 14; xvii, 10–13).

Ariel.

The name Ariel is used in Isa. xxix, 1, 2, 7, as a symbolical designation of Jerusalem, but its mystical import is quite uncertain. The word, according to Gesenius,[1] may denote either *lion of God*, or *altar of God;* but whether it should be understood as denoting the city of lion-like heroes, or of invincible strength, or as the city of the altar place, it is impossible to determine. Fuerst thinks (Heb. Lex.), in view of Isa. xxxi, 9, "where Jerusalem is celebrated as a sacred hearth of the everlasting fire, it is more advisable to choose this signification."

Leviathan, the serpent.

A hostile, oppressive world-power is designated in Isa. xxvii, 1, as "Leviathan, a flying serpent, Leviathan, a crooked serpent . . . a dragon which is in the sea." Some think three different hostile powers are meant, but the repetition of the name Leviathan, and the poetic parallelism of the passage, are against that view. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media, Persia, and Rome have all been suggested as the hostile power intended. It is, perhaps, best to understand it generically as a symbolic name for any and every godless world-power that sets itself up as an opposer and oppressor of the people of God.

[1] Commentar über den Jesaia, in loco.

Symbolism of Colours.

The setting of the rainbow in the cloud for a covenant sign between God and the land, that no flood of waters should again destroy all flesh (Gen. ix, 8–17) would naturally associate the prominent colours of that bow with ideas of heavenly grace. In the construction of the tabernacle four colours are prominent, *blue*, *purple*, *scarlet*, and *white* (Exod. xxv, 4; xxvi, 1, 31; xxxv, 6, etc.), and the blending of these in the coverings and appurtenances of that symbolic structure probably served not only for the sake of beauty and variety, but also to suggest thoughts of heavenly excellence and glory. The exact colours, tints, or shades denoted by the Hebrew words translated *blue*, *purple*, and *scarlet* (תְּכֵלֶת, אַרְגָּמָן, and שְׁנִי תוֹלַעַת), it is hardly possible now to determine with absolute certainty,[1] but probably the common version is sufficiently correct.

Rainbow and tabernacle colours.

The import of these several colours is to be gathered from the associations in which they appear. Blue, as the colour of the heaven, reflected in the sea, would naturally suggest that which is heavenly, holy, and divine. Hence it was appropriate that the robe of the ephod was made wholly of blue (Exod. xxviii, 31; xxxix, 22), and the breastplate was connected with it by blue cords (ver. 28). It was also by a blue cord or ribbon that the golden plate inscribed "Holiness to Jehovah" was attached to the high priest's mitre (ver. 31). The loops of the tabernacle curtains were of this colour (Exod. xxvi, 4), and the children of Israel were commanded to place blue ribbons as badges upon the borders of their garments (Num. xv, 37–41) as if to remind them that they were children of the heavenly King, and were under the responsibility of having received from him commandments and revelations. Hence, too, it was appropriate that a blue cloth was spread over the holiest things of the tabernacle when they were arranged for journeying forward (Num. iv, 6, 7, 11, 12).

Import of colours to be inferred from their association.

Blue.

Purple and scarlet, so often mentioned in connexion with the dress of kings, have very naturally been regarded as symbolical of royalty and majesty (Judg. viii, 26; Esther

Purple and Scarlet.

[1] See Bähr's section on the Beschaffenheit der Farben in his chapter on Die Farben und Bildwerke der Cultus-Stätte, Symbolik, vol. i (new ed.), pp. 331–337. See also Atwater, Sacred Tabernacle of the Hebrews, pp. 209–224, and the various biblical dictionaries and cyclopædias, under the word *Colours*. Josephus' explanation of the import of these colours (Ant., iii, 7, sec. 7) is more fanciful than authoritative or satisfactory.

viii, 15; Dan. v, 7; Nah. ii, 3). Both these colours, along with blue, appeared upon the curtains of the tabernacle (Exod. xxvi, 1) and upon the veil that separated the holy place from the most holy (Exod. xxvi, 31). A scarlet cloth covered the holy vessels which were placed upon the table of showbread, and a purple cloth the altar of burnt offerings (Num. iv, 8, 13).

White. White is, pre-eminently, the colour of purity and righteousness. The Hebrew word for *fine linen*, or *byssus* (שֵׁשׁ), of which the covering and veil and curtains of the tabernacle were partly made (Exod. xxvi, 1, 31, 36) is from a root which signifies *whiteness*, or *to be white*. It was also largely used in the vestments of the high priest (Exod. xxviii, 5, 6, 8, 15, 39). Of kindred signification is the Hebrew word בַּד, *white linen*, in which the Levitical singers were arrayed (2 Chron. v, 12). With these white garments of the priests and Levites (comp. Psa. cxxxii, 9) we naturally associate the raiment "white as the light" in which the transfigured Christ appeared (Matt. xvii, 2; Mark ix, 3), the apparel of the angels (Matt. xxviii, 3; John xx, 12; Acts i, 10), the white robes of the glorified (Rev. vii, 9), and the fine linen bright and pure, symbolic of "the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev. xix, 8), which is the ornamental vesture of the wife of the Lamb. Also, as characterizing the horses of victorious warriors (Zech. i, 8; vi, 3; Rev. vi, 2; xix, 11), and the throne of judgment (Rev. xx, 11), white may represent victorious royalty and power.

Black and Red. Black, as being the opposite of white, would easily become associated with that which is evil, as mourning (Jer. xiv, 2), pestilence, and famine (Rev. vi, 5, 6). Red is naturally associated with war and bloodshed, as the armour of the armed warrior is suggestive of tumult and garments rolled in blood (Isa. ix, 5; Nah. ii, 3). But in any attempt to explain the symbolism of a particular colour the interpreter should guard against pressing the matter to an unwarranted extreme. The most prudent and learned exegetes have reasonably doubted whether the different colours of the horses seen in Zechariah's first vision (Zech. i, 8) should be construed as having each a definite symbolical significance. The several colours of the curtains of the tabernacle appear to have been somewhat promiscuously blended together (Exod. xxvi, 1, 31), and when thus used they served probably for beauty and adornment rather than for separate and specific symbolical import. Only as an interpreter is able to show from parallel usage, analogy and inherent propriety, that a given colour is used symbolically, will his exposition be entitled to command assent.

The same thing, substantially, may be said of the symbolical import of metals. No specific significance should be sought in each separate metal or precious stone, for any attempt to point out such significancy is apt to run into various freaks of fancy.[1] But the pure gold with which the ark, mercyseat, cherubim, altar of incense, table, and candlestick, were either overlaid or entirely constructed (Exod. xxv), might very appropriately symbolize the light and splendour of God as he dwells in his holy temple. The altar of burntofferings was overlaid with brass or copper (Exod. xxvii, 2), an inferior metal. The pillars of the court were also made of this material (Exod. xxvii, 10). The sockets of the tabernacle boards, and the hooks and joinings of the pillars, were of silver (Exod. xxvi, 19; xxvii, 10). Outside of any attempt to trace a mystic meaning in each of these metals, it may be enough to say, in general, that gold, as being the more costly, would appropriately be used in constructing the holiest things of the inner sanctuary. Brass would, accordingly, be more appropriate for the things of the outer court, and silver, intermediate between the two, would naturally serve, to some extent, in both. The great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream combined gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay (Dan. ii, 32, 33). The power, strength, and glory of the Babylonian monarchy, as represented in the regal splendour of the king, Nebuchadnezzar, was represented by the golden head (verses 37 and 38). The silver denoted an inferior kingdom. The iron denoted, especially, the strength of the fourth kingdom, "inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and crushes every thing" (ver. 40). So the different metals used in the construction of the tabernacle were expressive of the relative sanctity of its different parts. The twelve precious stones in the high priest's breastplate, bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (Exod. xxviii, 15–21), and the twelve foundations of Jerusalem the golden (Rev. xxi, 14), may symbolize God's own elect as his precious jewels; but an effort to tell which tribe, or which apostle, was designated by each particular jewel, would lead the interpreter into unauthorized speculations, more likely to bewilder and confuse than to furnish any valuable lesson.

Symbolical import of the precious Metals and Jewels.

[1] See the third chapter of Bähr's Symbolik (vol. i, New ed.) on Das Baumaterial der Cultus-Stätte, pp. 283–330, in which not a little of valuable suggestion is presented along with much that is too fanciful to be safely accepted. See also Atwater, Sacred Tabernacle of the Hebrews, pp. 225–232.

CHAPTER XIII.

DREAMS AND PROPHETIC ECSTASY.

Methods of divine revelation.

In an intelligent exposition of the prophetic portions of Holy Scripture, the methods and forms by which God communicated supernatural revelations to men become questions of fundamental importance. Dreams, night visions, and states of spiritual ecstacy are mentioned as forms and conditions under which men received such revelations. In Num. xii, 6, it is written: "If there be a prophet among you, I, Jehovah, will make myself known to him in the vision; in the dream will I speak within him."[1] The open and visible manner in which Jehovah revealed himself to Moses is then (verses 7, 8) contrasted with ordinary visions, showing that Moses was honoured above all prophets in the intimacy of his communion with God. The *appearance* (תְּמוּנָה, *form*, *semblance*, ver. 8) of Jehovah which Moses was permitted to behold was some thing far above what other holy seers beheld (comp. Deut. xxxiv, 12). This appearance "was not the essential nature of God, his unveiled glory, for this no mortal man can see (Exod. xxxiii, 18), but a form which manifested the invisible God to the eye of man in a clearly discernible mode, and which was essentially different, not only from the visional sight of God in the form of a man (Ezek. i, 26; Dan. vii, 9, 13), but also from the appearances of God in the outward world of the senses in the person and form of the angel of Jehovah, and stood in the same relation to these two forms of revelation, so far as directness and clearness were concerned, as the sight of a person in a dream to that of the actual figure of the person himself. God talked with Moses without figure, in the clear distinctness of a spiritual communication, whereas to the prophets he only revealed himself through the medium of ecstacy or dream."[2]

The Dreams of Scripture.

The dream is noticeably prominent among the earlier forms of receiving divine revelations, but becomes less frequent at a later period. The most remarkable instances of dreams recorded in the Scriptures are those of Abimelech (Gen. xx,

[1] בּוֹ, *within him*, not *unto him*, as the common version. "*In him*," says Keil, "inasmuch as a revelation in a dream fell within the inner sphere of the soul life."—Commentary on the Pentateuch, in loco. Compare Job xxxiii, 14–17.

[2] Keil's Commentary on Num. xii, 8.

3–7), Jacob at Bethel (xxviii, 12), Laban in Mt. Gilead (xxxi, 24), Joseph respecting the sheaves and the luminaries (xxxvii, 5–10), the butler and the baker (xl, 5–19), Pharaoh (xli, 1–32), the Midianite (Judg. vii, 13–15), Solomon (1 Kings iii, 5; ix, 2), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii and iv), Daniel (Dan. vii, 1), Joseph (Matt. i, 20; ii, 13, 19), and the Magi from the East (Matt. ii, 12). The "night vision" appears to have been of essentially the same nature as the dream (comp. Dan. ii, 19; vii, 1; Acts xvi, 9; xviii, 9; xxvii, 23).

It is manifest that in man's interior nature there exist powers and latent possibilities which only extraordinary occasions or peculiar conditions serve to display. And these facts it becomes the interpreter to note. These latent powers are occasionally seen in cases of disordered mental action and insanity. The phenomena of somnambulism and clairvoyance also exhibit the same. And ordinary dreams, considered as abnormal operations of the perceptive faculties uncontrolled by the judgment and the will, are often of a striking and impressive character. The dreams of Joseph, of the butler and baker, and of the Midianite, are not represented as divine or supernatural revelations. Innumerable instances equally striking have occurred to other men. But at the same time, all such impressive dreams bring out into partial manifestation latent potencies of the human soul which may well have served in the communication of divine revelations to men. "The deep of man's internal nature," observes Delitzsch, "into which in sleep he sinks back, conceals far more than is manifest to himself. It has been a fundamental error of most psychologists hitherto to make the soul extend only so far as its consciousness extends; it embraces, as is now always acknowledged, a far greater abundance of powers and relations than can commonly appear in its consciousness. To this abundance pertains, moreover, the faculty of foreboding, that leads and warns a man without conscious motive, and anticipates the future—a faculty which, in the state of sleep, wherein the outer senses are fettered, is frequently unbound, and looms in the remoteness of the future." [1]

Dreams evince latent powers of the soul.

The profound and far-reaching significance of some prophetic dreams may be seen in that of Jacob at Bethel (Gen. xxviii, 10–22). This son of Isaac was guilty of grave wrongs, but in his quiet and thoughful soul there was a hiding of power, a susceptibility for divine things, a spiritual insight and longing that made him a fitter person than Esau to lead in the development of the chosen nation. He appears to have passed the

Jacob's dream at Bethel.

[1] Biblical Psychology, English translation (Edinb., 1879), p. 330. See his whole section on Sleeping, Waking, and Dreaming, from which the above extract is taken.

night in the open field near the ancient town of Luz (ver. 19). Before darkness covered him he, doubtless, like Abraham in that same place long before (Gen. xiii, 14), looked northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, and saw afar the hills and mountains towering up like a stairway into heaven, and this view may have been, in part, a psychological preparation for his dream. For, falling asleep, he beheld a ladder or stairway (סֻלָּם), perhaps a gigantic staircase composed of piles of mountains placed one upon another so as to look like a wondrous highway of passage to the skies. The main points of his dream fall under four BEHOLDS, three of vision—"behold, a ladder," "behold, angels of God," "behold, Jehovah" (verses 12, 13)—and one of promise—"behold, I am with thee" (ver. 15). These words imply an intense impressiveness in the whole revelation. It was a night vision by means of which the great future of Jacob and his seed was set forth in symbol and in promise. For Jacob at the bottom of the ladder, Jehovah at the top, and angels ascending and descending, form altogether a complex symbol full of profound suggestions. It indicated at least four things: (1) There is a way opened between earth and heaven by which spirits may ascend to God. (2) The ministry of angels. (3) The mystery of the incarnation: for the ladder was a symbol of the Son of man, the way (*ἡ ὁδός*, John xiv, 4, 6; Heb. ix, 8) into the holiest heaven, the Mediator upon whom, as the sole ground and basis of all possibility of grace, the angels of God ascend and descend to minister to the heirs of salvation (John i, 52). In that mystery of grace Jehovah himself reaches down as from the top of the ladder, and lays hold upon this son of Abraham and all his spiritual seed, and lifts them up to heaven. (4) The promise, in connexion with the vision (verses 13–15), emphasized the wonderful providence of God, who stood (ver. 13) gazing down upon this lonely, helpless man, and making gracious provision for him and his posterity.

We need not assume that Jacob understood the far-reaching import of that dream, but it led him to make a holy vow, and, doubtless, it was often afterward the subject of his quiet meditations. It could not fail to impress him with the conviction that he was a special object of Jehovah's care, and of the ministry of angels.

Interpretation of dreams.

It is noticeable that the record of the prophetic dreams of the heathen, as, for example, those of Pharaoh and his butler and baker, of the Midianite, and of Nebuchadnezzar, are accompanied by an ample explanation. We observe also that the dreams of Joseph and of Pharaoh were double, or repeated under different forms. Joseph's first dream was a vision of sheaves in

the harvest field; his second, of the sun, moon, and eleven stars (Gen. xxxvii, 5–11). They both conveyed the same prognostication, and were so far understood by his brethren and his father as to excite the envy of the former and draw the serious attention of the latter. Joseph explains the two dreams of Pharaoh as one (Gen. xli, 25), and declared that the repetition of the dream to Pharaoh twice was because the word was established from God, and God was hastening to accomplish it (ver. 32). Here is a hint for the interpretation of other dreams and visions. Daniel's dream-vision of the four beasts out of the sea (Dan. vii) is, in substance, a repetition of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, and the visions of the eighth and eleventh chapters, go partly over the same ground again. God thus repeats his revelations under various forms, and thereby denotes their certainty as the determinate purposes of his will. Many visions of the Apocalypse are also, apparently, symbols of the same events, or else move so largely over the same field as to warrant the belief that they, too, are repetitions, under different forms, of things that were shortly to come to pass, and the certainty of which was fixed in the purposes of God.

Repetition of dreams and visions.

But dreams, we observed, were rather the earlier and lower forms of divine revelation. A higher form was that of prophetic ecstasy, in which the spirit of the seer became possessed of the Spirit of God, and, while yet retaining its human consciousness, and susceptible of human emotion, was rapt away into visions of the Almighty and made cognizant of words and things which no mortal could naturally perceive. In 2 Sam. vii, 4–17, we have the record of "a word of Jehovah" that came to Nathan in a night vision (see ver. 17) and was communicated to David. It contained the prophecy and promise that his kingdom and throne should be established forever. It was for David an impressive oracle, and he "went and sat down before Jehovah" (ver. 18), and wondered and worshipped. Such wonder and worship were probably, at that or some other time, a means of inducing the psychological condition and spiritual ecstasy in which the second psalm was composed. David becomes a seer and prophet. "The Spirit of Jehovah spoke within him, and his word was upon his tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii, 2). He is lifted into visional ecstasy, in which the substance of Nathan's prophecy takes a new and higher form, transcending all earthly royalty and power. He sees Jehovah enthroning his Anointed (מְשִׁיחוֹ, *his Messiah*) upon Zion, the mountain of his holiness (Psa. ii, 2, 6). The nations rage against him, and struggle to cast off his authority, but they are

Prophetic ecstasy or visional trance.

utterly discomfited by him who "sitteth in the heavens," and to whom the nations are given for an inheritance. Thus, the second psalm is seen to be no mere historical ode, composed upon the regal inauguration of David or Solomon, or any other earthly prince. A greater than either David or Solomon arose in the psalmist's vision. For he is clearly styled the Messiah, the Son of Jehovah; the kings and judges of the earth are counselled to kiss him, that they may not perish, and all who put their trust in him are pronounced blessed. And it is only as the interpreter attains a vivid apprehension of the power of such ecstasy that he can properly perceive or explain the import of any Messianic prophecy.

Ezekiel's Rapture.

Another illustration of the prophetical ecstasy may be seen in Ezekiel's statements. At the beginning of his prophecies he uses four different expressions to indicate the form and power in which he received revelations (Ezek. i, 1, 3). The heavens were opened, visions of God were seen, the word of Jehovah came with great force,[1] and the hand of Jehovah was laid upon him. Allowing for whatever of the poetical element these expressions contain, it remains evident that the prophet experienced a mighty interworking of human and superhuman powers. The visions of God caused him to fall upon his face (ver. 28), and, anon, the Spirit lifted him up upon his feet (chap. ii, 1, 2). At another time the form of a hand reached forth and took him by a lock of his head, and transported him in the visions of God to Jerusalem (Ezek. viii, 3). From this it would appear that for a mortal man to receive consciously a revelation from the Infinite Spirit two things are essential. The human spirit must become divinely exalted, or rapt away from its ordinary life and operations, and the Divine Spirit must so take possession of its energies, and quicken them into supersensual perception, that they become temporary organs of the Infinite. The whole process is manifestly a divine-human, or theandric operation. And yet, through it all, the human spirit retains its normal consciousness and knows the vision is divine.

Other examples of Ecstasy.

The same things appear also in the visions of Daniel. He beholds the prophetic symbols, he hears the words of the angel interpreter Gabriel, and he too falls upon his face, overwhelmed with the deep sleep that stupifies the active powers of the mind, and puts him in full possession of the revealing angel (Dan. viii, 17, 18). The touch of the angel lifts him into the ecstasy in which he sees and hears the heavenly word. This

[1] Heb. הָיוֹ הָיָה, *coming came*, the Hebrew idiomatic way of giving emphasis to a thought by repeating the verb, and using its absolute infinitive form.

peculiar form of prophetic ecstasy appears to have differed from the "dream and visions of his head upon his bed" (Dan. vii, 1), in that this latter seized him during the slumbers of the night, whereas the other came upon him during his waking consciousness, and probably while in the act of prayer (comp. chap. ix, 21). The ecstasy which came upon Peter on the housetop came in connexion with his praying and a sense of great hunger (Acts x, 9, 10). The act of prayer was a spiritual preparation, and the hunger furnished a physical and psychical condition, by means of which the form of the vision and the command to slay and eat became the more impressive. Paul's similar ecstasy in the temple at Jerusalem was preceded by prayer (Acts xxii, 17), and his experience of these "visions and revelations of God," narrated in 2 Cor. xii, 1–4, was in such a transcendent rapture of soul that he knew not whether he were in the body or out of the body. That is, he knew not whether his whole person had been rapt away in visions of God, like Ezekiel (viii, 3), or whether merely the spirit had been elevated into visional ecstasy. His consciousness in this matter seems to have been overcome by the excessive greatness (ὑπερβολῇ) of the revelations (ver. 7). And probably had Ezekiel been called upon to say whether his rapture to Jerusalem were in the body or out of the body, he would have answered as uncertainly as Paul.

The prophetic ecstasy, of which the above are notable examples, was evidently a spiritual sight seeing,[1] a supernatural illumination, in which the natural eye was either closed (comp. Num. xxiv, 3, 4) or suspended from its ordinary functions, and the inner senses vividly grasped the scene that was presented, or the divine word which was revealed. We need not refine so far as, with Delitzsch, to classify this divine ecstasy into three forms, as mystic, prophetic, and charismatic. All ecstasy is mystic, and charismatic ecstasy may have been prophetic; but we may still, with him, define prophetic ecstasy as consisting essentially in this, that the human spirit is seized and compassed by the Divine Spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and seized with such uplifting energy that, being averted from its ordinary conditions of limitation in the body, it becomes altogether a seeing eye, a hearing ear, a perceiving sense, that takes most vivid cognizance of things in time or eternity, according as they are presented by the power and wisdom of God.[2]

The grandest form of prophetic ecstasy is that in which the vision

[1] For this reason the Old Testament prophet is often called the *seer* (רֹאֶה and חֹזֶה). He was a *beholder* of visions from the Almighty.

[2] Comp. Delitzsch, Biblical Psychology, p. 421.

(חָזוֹן) and word (דָּבָר) of Jehovah appear to have become so absorbed by the prophet's heaven-lit soul that he himself personates the Holy One, and speaks in Jehovah's name. So we understand the later chapters of Isaiah, where the person of the prophet sinks comparatively out of sight, and Jehovah announces himself as the speaker. So, too, Zechariah announces the word of Jehovah touching "the flock of slaughter" Zech. xi, 4), but as he proceeds with the divine oracle, he seems to lose the consciousness of his own distinct personality, and to speak in the name and person of his Lord (vers. 10–14).[1]

The prophet lost in God.

A later and mysterious manifestation of spiritual ecstasy appears in the New Testament glossolaly, or gift of speaking with tongues. Among the signs to follow those who should believe through the apostles' preaching, a speaking with "new[2] tongues" was specified (Mark xvi, 17); and the disciples were commanded by Jesus to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke xxiv, 49). On the day of Pentecost "there came suddenly from heaven a sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them self-distributing (*διαμεριζόμεναι*) tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts ii, 3, 4). A like display was manifest at the conversion of Cornelius (Acts x, 46), and when, after their baptism, Paul laid his hands upon the twelve disciples of John the Baptist whom he found at Ephesus (Acts xix, 6). But the most extensive treatment of the subject is found in 1 Cor. xiv, with which are to be compared also the incidental references in chaps. xii, 10, 28, and xiii, 1. From this Corinthian epistle it appears, (1) that it was a supernatural gift, a divine *χάρισμα*, that marked with a measure of novelty the first outgoings of the Gospel of Christ. (2) There were different kinds (*γένη*, *sorts*, *classes*, 1 Cor. xii, 10) of tongues. (3) The speaking with tongues was a speaking unto God rather than man (xiv, 2) and an utterance of mysteries, which edified the subjective spirit of the

Glossolaly, or speaking with tongues.

[1] "The prophet himself sometimes speaks from God," observes Delitzsch, "sometimes God himself speaks from the prophet; sometimes the divine Ego asserts itself with a supreme power that absorbs all other, sometimes the human in the entire fulness of sanctified humanity; but in both cases it is the personality of the prophet, in the totality of its pneumatico-psychical powers, which becomes the more active or passive organ of God."—Biblical Psychology, p. 421.

[2] The word *καιναῖς*, *new*, is omitted by several of the chief MS. authorities for the close of Mark's Gospel. In Westcott and Hort's edition of the Greek Testament the word is placed in the margin, but omitted from the text.

speaker (ver. 4), but was unintelligible to the common understanding (*νοῦς*, ver. 14). (4) The speaking with tongues took the form of worship, and manifested itself in prayer, singing, and thanksgiving (vers. 14–16). (5) Though edifying to the speaker, it did not tend to edify the Church unless one gifted with the interpretation of tongues, either the speaker himself or another, explained what was uttered. (6) It was a sign to the unbeliever, accompanied probably with such evidences of the supernatural as, at first, to impress the hearer with a sense of awe, but calculated on the whole to lead such as had no sympathy with the Gospel to say that these speakers were either mad or filled with wine (ver. 23; comp. Acts ii, 13). (7) It was a gift for which one might thank God (ver. 18), and not to be forbidden in the Church (ver. 39), but was to be coveted less than other charisms, and, especially, less than the gift of prophesying unto the edifying of the Church (vers. 1, 5, 19); for "greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks with tongues, except he interpret."

The Pentecostal Glossolaly symbolical.

Such is substantially what Paul says of this remarkable gift. On the day of Pentecost it took the form of appropriating the various dialects of the hearers, so as to fill them all with amazement and wonder (Acts ii, 5–12). This, however, appears to have been an exceptional manifestation, perhaps a miraculous exhibition, for a symbolic purpose, of all the *kinds* of tongues (comp. 1 Cor. xii, 10), which on other occasions were separate and individually distinct. Certainly the speaking with tongues in the Corinthian church was accompanied by no such effect upon the hearers as on the day of Pentecost. The once prevalent notion that this glossolaly was a supernatural gift, by which the first preachers of the Gospel were enabled to proclaim the word of life in the various languages of foreign nations, has little in its favour. There is no intimation, outside of the miracle of Pentecost, that this gift ever served such a purpose. And that miracle, whatever its real nature, seems rather like a symbolical sign, signifying that the confusion of tongues, which came as a curse at Babel, should be counteracted and abolished by the Gospel of the new life, then just breaking in heavenly charismatic power upon the world.[1] That evangelic word was destined to become potent in all the languages of men, and by the living voice of preachers, and through the written volume, utter its heavenly messages to the nations, until all should know the Lord.

[1] Poena linguarum dispersit homines (Gen. xi); donum linguarum dispersos in unam populum collegit (The punishment of tongues scattered men abroad; the gift of tongues gathered the dispersed into one people).—Grotius, Annotations on Acts, ii, 3.

The exact nature of the New Testament glossolaly it is probably now impossible to define. It may have been, in some instances, a soul-ecstasy, in which men worshipped strangely, and lost control of a part of their faculties. Something like this was experienced by Saul when he met the band of prophets (1 Sam. x, 9–12), and when, at a later time, he prophesied before Samuel, and fell down under the power of the Spirit of God (1 Sam. xix, 23, 24). At other times it may have been a condition of receiving visions and revelations of God, as when Paul was caught up to paradise, "and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. xii, 4). Possibly in that heavenly rapture this apostle received his conception of "the tongues of the angels" (1 Cor. xiii, 1).[1] But whatever its real nature, it was essentially an ecstatic speaking of mysteries (1 Cor. xiv, 2), involving such a divine communion with God as lifted the spirit of the rapt believer into the realm of the unseen and eternal, and produced in him an awe-inspiring sense of supernatural exaltation.[2]

Glossolaly a mysterious power.

[1] According to Stanley, the gift of tongues "was a trance or ecstasy, which, in moments of great religious fervour, especially at the moment of conversion, seized the early believers; and this fervour vented itself in expressions of thanksgiving, in fragments of psalmody or hymnody and prayer, which to the speaker himself conveyed an irresistible sense of communion with God, and to the bystander an impression of some extraordinary manifestation of power, but not necessarily any instruction or teaching, and sometimes even having the appearance of wild excitement, like that of madness or intoxication. It was the most emphatic sign to each individual believer that a power mightier than his own was come into the world; and in those who, like the Apostle Paul, possessed this gift in a high degree, 'speaking with tongues more than they all,' it would, when combined with the other more remarkable gifts which he possessed, form a fitting mood for the reception of 'God's secrets' (*μυστήρια*), and of 'unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter,' 'being caught into the third heaven,' and into 'Paradise.' And thus the nearest written example of this gift is that exhibited in the abrupt style and the strange visions of the Apocalypse, in which, almost in the words of St. Paul, the prophet is described as being 'in the Spirit on the Lord's day,' and 'hearing a voice as of a trumpet,' and seeing 'a door open in heaven,' and 'a throne set in heaven,' and 'the New Jerusalem,' 'the river of life,' and 'the tree of life.'"—Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, pp. 246, 247. London, 1876.

[2] See Rossteuscher, Gabe der Sprachen (Marb., 1850); Hilgenfeld, Glossolalie in der alten Kirche (Lpz., 1850); Neander, Planting and Training of the Christian Church (New ed., New York, 1864), Book I, chap. i; Schaff, Hist. of the Christian Church (New ed., New York, 1882), vol. i, pp. 230–242; Stanley, St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, Introductory Dissertation to chap. xiv; Kling on the Corinthians (in Lange's Biblework), pp. 282–301, Amer. ed., translated and enlarged by Dr. Poor; Keim, article Zungenreden, in Herzog's Real-Encyclopädie (vol. xviii, ed. Gotha, 1864); Plumptre's article on the Gift of Tongues in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROPHECY AND ITS INTERPRETATION.

A THOROUGH interpretation of the prophetic portions of the holy Scripture is largely dependent upon a mastery of the principles and laws of figurative language, and of types and symbols. It requires also some acquaintance with the nature of vision-seeing ecstacy and dreams. The foregoing chapters have, therefore, been a necessary preparation for an intelligent study of those more abstruse writings, which have continuously exercised the most gifted minds of the Church, and yet have been most variously interpreted.

Magnitude and scope of Scripture Prophecy.

Inspired oracles, forecasting the future, wrought out with every variety of figurative speech, and often embodied in type and symbol, are interspersed throughout the entire Scriptures, and constitute a uniting bond between the Old Testament and the New. The first great prophecy was uttered in Paradise, where man originally sinned and first felt the need of a Redeemer. It was repeated in many forms and portions as years and centuries passed. The Christ of God, the mighty Prophet, Priest, and King, was its loftiest theme; but it also dealt so copiously with all man's relations to God and to the world, with human hopes and fears, with civil governments and national responsibilities, with divine laws and purposes, that its written records are a textbook of divine counsel for all time.[1]

Prophesying, according to the Scriptures, is not primarily a prediction of future events. The Hebrew word for prophet, נָבִיא,

[1] The subjects of prophecy varied. Whilst it was all directed to one general design, in the evidence and support of religion, there was a diversity in the administration of the Spirit in respect of that design. In Paradise, it gave the first hope of a Redeemer. After the deluge, it established the peace of the natural world. In Abraham it founded the double covenant of Canaan and the Gospel. In the age of the law, it spoke of the second prophet, and foreshadowed, in types, the Christian doctrine, but foretold most largely the future fate of the selected people, who were placed under that preparatory dispensation. In the time of David it revealed the Gospel kingdom, with the promise of the temporal. In the days of the later prophets it presignified the changes of the Mosaic covenant, embraced the history of the chief pagan kingdoms, and completed the annunciation of the Messiah and his work of redemption. After the captivity, it gave a last and more urgent information of the approaching advent of the Gospel.—Davison, Discourses on Prophecy, pp. 355, 356. Oxford, 1834.

signifies one who speaks under the pressure of a divine fervour,[1] and the prophet is especially to be regarded as one who bears a divine message, and acts as the spokesman of the Almighty. Aaron was divinely appointed as the spokesman of Moses, to repeat God's word from his mouth (Exod. iv, 16), and thereby was Moses made as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron served as his prophet (נָבִיא, Exod. vii, 1). Hence the prophet is the announcer of a divine message, and that message may refer to the past, the present, or the future. It may be a revelation, a warning, a rebuke, an exhortation, a promise, or a prediction. The bearer of such a message is appropriately called a "man of God" (1 Kings xiii, 1; 2 Kings iv, 7, 9), and a "man of the Spirit" (Hos. ix, 7). It is important also to observe that a very large proportion of the Old Testament prophetical books consists of warning, expostulation, and rebuke; and there are intimations of many unwritten prophecies of this character. "The prophets," says Fairbairn, "were in a peculiar sense the spiritual watchmen of Judah and Israel, the representatives of divine truth and holiness, whose part it was to keep a wakeful and jealous eye upon the manners of the times, to detect and reprove the symptoms of defection which appeared, and by every means in their power foster and encourage the spirit of real godliness. And such pre-eminently was Elijah, who is therefore taken in the Scripture as the type of the whole prophetical order in the earlier stages of its development; a man of heroic energy of action rather than of prolific thought and elevating discourse. The words he spoke were few, but they were words spoken as from the secret place of thunder, and seemed more like decrees issuing from the presence of the Eternal than the utterances of one of like passions with those whom he addressed."[2]

Prophecy not merely prediction, but utterance of God's truth.

[1] Gesenius derives the word from the root נָבָא, equivalent to נָבַע, to *boil forth*; to *gush out*; to *flow*, as a fountain. Hence the idea of one upon whom the vision-seeing ecstacy falls; or of one who is borne along and carried aloft by a supernatural inspiration (*ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι*; 2 Pet. i, 21). "Hebrew prophecy, like the Hebrew people, stands without parallel in the history of the world. Other nations have had their oracles, diviners, augurs, soothsayers, necromancers. The Hebrews alone have possessed prophets and a prophetic literature. It is useless, therefore, to go to the manticism of the heathen to get light as to the nature of Hebrew prophecy. To follow the rabbis of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is just as vain. The only reliable sources of information on the subject are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments."—M'Call, in Aids to Faith, p. 97. On the distinction between the prophet (נָבִיא) and the seer (רֹאֶה, and חוֹזֶה) see Smith, Prophecy a Preparation for Christ (Bampton Lectures), pp. 68–86. Boston, 1870.

[2] Prophecy, viewed in respect to its Distinctive Nature, Special Functions, and Proper Interpretation, p. 37. N. Y., 1866. Philippi (Commentary on Romans xii, 6) observes that "the New Testament idea of the prophetic office is essentially identical

It is principally those portions of the prophetic Scriptures which forecast the future that call for special hermeneutics. Being exceptional in their character, they demand exceptional study and care in interpretation. Other prophecies, consisting mainly of rebuke, expostulation, or warning, are so readily apprehended by the common mind as to need no extended explanation. Avoiding, on the one side, the extreme literalistic error that the biblical predictions are "history written beforehand," and on the other, the rationalistic notions that they are either happy guesses of the probable outcome of impending events, or else a peculiar portraiture of them after they had taken place (*vaticinium post eventum*), we accept these predictions as divine oracles of events that were subsequently to come to pass, but so expressed in figure and symbol as to demand great care on the part of him who would understand and interpret them. When we deny that prophecy is a history of events before they come to pass, we mean to say that prophecy is in no proper sense history. History is the record of what has already occurred; prediction is a foretelling of what is to come, and nearly always in some form of statement or revelation that takes it outside of the line of literal narrative. There are cases, indeed, where the prediction is a specific declaration of incidents of the simplest character; as when Samuel foretold to Saul the particular events that would befall him on his return to Gibeah (1 Sam. x, 3–6); but it is misleading to call even such predictions a *history* of future events, for it is a confusion of the proper usage of words. There is an element of mystery about all predictions, and those of greatest moment in the Scriptures are clothed in a symbolic drapery.[1]

Only prophecies of the future call for special hermeneutics.

History and prediction should not be confused.

with that of the Old Testament. Prophets are men who, inspired by the Spirit of God, and impelled to theopneustic discourse, partly remove the veil from the future (Rev. i, 3; xxii, 7, 10; John xi, 51; Acts xi, 27, 28; xxi, 10, 11. Comp. 1 Pet. i, 10)—partly make known concealed facts of the present, either in discovering the secret counsel and will of God (Luke i, 67; Acts xiii, 1; Eph. iii, 5), or in disclosing the hidden thoughts of man (1 Cor. xiv, 24, 25), and dragging into light his unknown deeds (Matt. xxvi, 68; Mark xiv, 65; Luke xxii, 64; John iv, 19)—partly dispense to their hearers instruction, comfort, exhortation, in animated, powerfully impassioned language, going far beyond the wonted limits of the capacity for teaching, which, although spiritual, still confines itself within the forms of reason (Matt. vii, 28, 29; Luke xxiv, 19; John vii, 40; Acts xv, 32; 1 Cor. xiv, 3, 4, 31)."

[1] Fairbairn has an able chapter on "The place of prophecy in history, and the organic connexion of the one with the other" (Prophecy, pp. 33–53). He traces the beginning and growth of prophecy in the sacred history, showing how "it appears somewhat like a river, small in its beginnings, and though still proceeding, yet often losing itself for ages under ground, then bursting forth anew with increased volume, and at last rising into a swollen stream—greatest by far when it has come within

In order to a proper interpretation of prophecy three things are to be particularly studied, (1) the organic relations and inter-dependence of the principal predictions on record; (2) the usage and import of figures and symbols; and (3) analysis and comparison of similar prophecies, especially such as have been divinely interpreted, and such as have been clearly fulfilled.

Fundamental principles.

1. Organic Relations of Prophecy.

In studying the general structure and organic relations of the great prophecies, it will be seen that they are first presented in broad and bold outline, and subsequently expanded in their minor details. Thus the first great prophecy on record (Gen. iii, 15) is a brief but far-reaching announcement of the long conflict between good and evil, as these opposing principles, with all their forces, connect themselves with the Promised Seed of the woman on the one side, and the old serpent, the devil, on the other. It may be said that all other prophecies of the Christ and the kingdom of God are comprehended in the *protevangelium* as in a germ. From this point onward through the Scripture revelations the successive prophecies sustain a noticeably progressive character. Varying ideas of the Promised Seed appear in the prophecy of Noah (Gen. ix, 26, 27), and the repeated promises to Abraham (Gen. xii, 3; xvii, 2–8; xviii, 18). These Messianic predictions became more definite as they were repeatedly confirmed to Isaac, to Jacob, to Judah, and to the house of David. They constitute the noblest psalms and the grandest portions of the Greater and the Lesser Prophets. Taken separately, these different predictions are of a fragmentary character; each prophet

Progressive character of Messianic prophecy.

prospect of its termination" (p. 33). He observes further (p. 43): "Prophecy, therefore, being from the very first inseparably linked with the plan of grace unfolded in Scripture, is, at the same time, the necessary concomitant of sacred history. The two mutually act and react on each other. Prophecy gives birth to the history; the history, in turn, as it moves onward to its destined completion, at once fulfils prophecies already given, and calls forth further revelations. And so far from possessing the character of an excrescence, or existing merely as an anomaly in the procedure of God toward men, prophecy cannot even be rightly understood unless viewed in the relation to the order of the divine dispensations, and its actual place in history. . . . However closely related the two are to each other, they still have their own distinctive characteristics and, through these, their respective ends to serve. History is the *occasion* of prophecy, but not its *measure;* for prophecy rises above history, borne aloft by wings which carry it far above the present, and which it derives, not from the past occurrences of which history takes cognizance, but from Him to whom the future and the past are alike known. It is the communication of so much of his own supernatural light as he sees fit to let down upon the dark movements of history, to show whither they are conducting."

knew or caught glimpses of the Messianic future only in part, and he prophesied in part (1 Cor. xiii, 9); but when the Christ himself appeared, and fulfilled the prophecies, then all these fragmentary parts were seen to form a glorious harmony.[1]

Repetitions of oracles against heathen powers.

The oracle of Balaam touching Moab, Edom, Amalek, the Kenites, Asshur, and the power from the side of Chittim (Num. xxiv, 17–24), is the prophetic germ of many later oracles against these and similar enemies of the chosen people. Amos long after takes up the prophetic word, and speaks more fully against Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, and does not except even Judah and Israel (Amos i and ii). Compare also Isaiah's burden-prophecies (מַשָּׂא) against Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt, Media, Edom, Arabia, and Tyre (Isa. xiii–xxiii), in which we observe the minatory sentence uttered against these heathen powers in great detail. And as Balaam noticed the affliction of Eber, (i. e., Israel) in connexion with his last-named hostile power from Chittim (Num. xxiv, 24), so Isaiah introduces the "burden of the valley of vision" (Isa. xxii, 1) just before announcing the overthrow of Tyre (Isa. xxiii, 1). Jeremiah devotes chapters xlvi to li to the announcement of judgments upon Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, Elam, and Babylon, and amid these utterances of coming wrath are intimations of Israel's dispersion and sorrow (comp. chap. l, 17–20, 33; li, 5, 6, 45). Compare also Ezekiel's seven oracles against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt (Ezek. xxv to xxxii).

In noticeable analogy with the repetition of similar prophecies by different prophets, is the repetition of the same prophecy by one and the same prophet.

Daniel's two great prophecies (chaps. ii and vii) compared.

The vision of the four great beasts, in Dan. vii, is essentially a repetition of the vision of the great image in chapter ii. The same four great world-powers are denoted in these prophecies; but, as has often been observed, the imagery is varied according to the relative standpoint of the king and the prophet. "As presented to the view of Nebuchadnezzar, the worldly power was seen only in its *external* aspect, under the form of a colossal image possessing the likeness of a man, and in its more

[1] In the redemptive system of the Old Testament we see the unfolding germ whose flower and fruit appear under the New Covenant. The child Israel is trained by the pedagogy of prophecy for the manhood of Messianic times. The redemption of the law and the prophets is realized in him who came to fulfil the law and the prophets. And thus the Messianic prophecy of the Old Testament may be regarded as the New Testament in the Old.—Briggs, Messianic Prophecy, p. 63. New York, 1886.

conspicuous parts composed of the shining and precious metals; while the divine kingdom appeared in the meaner aspect of a stone, without ornament or beauty, with nothing, indeed, to distinguish it but its resistless energy and perpetual duration. Daniel's visions, on the other hand, direct the eye into the *interior* of things, strip the earthly kingdoms of their false glory by exhibiting them under the aspects of wild beasts and nameless monsters (such as are everywhere to be seen in the grotesque sculptures and painted entablatures of Babylon), and reserve the *human* form, in conformity with its divine, original, and true idea, to stand as the representative of the kingdom of God, which is composed of the saints of the Most High, and holds the truth that is destined to prevail over all error and ungodliness of men."[1]

The little horn of Dan. vii, 8, and viii, 9, the same power under different prophetic aspects.

So, again, the impressive vision of the ram and the he-goat, in Dan. viii, is but a repetition from another standpoint (Shushan, in Elam, a chief seat of the Medo-Persian monarchy) of the previous vision of the third and fourth beasts. Differences in detail appear according to the analogy of all such repeated prophecies, but these minor differences should not be allowed to obscure and obliterate the great fundamental analogies. Few expositors of any note have doubted that the little horn of Dan. viii, 9, denoted Antiochus Epiphanes, the bitter persecutor of the Jews, who "spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation for three years and six months."[2] The first and most natural presumption is that the little horn of chap. vii, 8, denotes the same impious and violent persecutor. The fact that one prophecy delineates the impiety and violence of this enemy more fully than another is no evidence that two different persons are intended. Otherwise the still fuller delineation of this monster of iniquity, given in chap. xi, must on this sole ground be referred to yet another person. The statements that the little horn of chap. vii, 8 came up between the ten horns, and rooted up three of them, and that of chap. viii, 9 came out from one of the four horns of the he-goat, can have no force in disproving the identity of the little horns in both passages unless it is assumed that the four horns of chap. viii, 8 are identical with the ten horns of chap. vii, 7 —an assumption which no one will allow. These are but the minor variations called for by the different positions occupied by the prophet in the different visions. If we understand the ten horns of chap. vii, 7 as a round number denoting the kings more fully

[1] Fairbairn on Prophecy, p. 122.

[2] Josephus, Wars, i, 1. Comp. Ant., xii, 5, 4, and 1 Maccabees i.

described in chap. xi, and the four conspicuous horns of chap. viii, 8 as the four notable successors of Alexander, the harmony of the two visions will be readily apparent. From one point of view the great horn (Alexander) was succeeded by ten horns, and also a little horn more notable in some respects than any of the ten; from another standpoint the great horn was seen to be followed by four notable horns (the famous Diadochoi), from the stump of one of which (Seleucus) came forth Antiochus Epiphanes. Only a failure to note the repetition of prophecies under various forms, and from different points of view, occasions the trouble which some have found in identifying prophecies of essentially the same great events.[1]

Other prophetic repetitions.

According to the principle here illustrated the still more minute prophecy of the later period of the Græco-Macedonian Empire, in Dan. xi, is seen to travel over much of the same field as those of chapters vii and viii. In the same manner we should naturally presume that the seven vials of the seven last plagues in Rev. xvi are intended to correspond with the seven woe-trumpets of chapters viii–xi. The striking resemblances between the two are such as to force a conviction that the terrible woes

[1] Pusey's discussion of this subject (Lectures on Daniel, Oxford, 1868) is an illustration of the dogmatic way in which a writer may magnify and mystify the merely formal and structural differences of visions. He affirms (p. 91): "The four-horned he-goat cannot agree with the fourth empire, whose division into ten is marked by the ten horns of the terrible beast and the ten toes of the image. Nor can the heavy ram, with its two horns, be identified with the superhuman swiftness of the four-headed leopard." But, according to Pusey, the two-horned ram of chap. viii, 3, 4, corresponds with the bear of chap. vii, 5, and the he-goat corresponds with the four-winged and four-headed leopard of chap. vii, 6. If, then, a ram with two horns "pushing westward, and northward, and southward, etc." (viii, 4), agrees with a bear having no horns at all, and, so far from pushing in any direction, is merely "raised up on one side ready to use the arm in which its chief strength lies," and "lifts itself up heavily, in contrast with the winged rapidity of the Chaldean conquests" (Pusey, p. 72), and holds three ribs in its teeth—with what consistency can it be claimed that the differences in the descriptions of the little horns of chaps. vii and viii must be fundamental? Pusey has no difficulty in harmonizing a he-goat having one notable horn, and then four horns in its place, and one little horn branching out of one of the four, with a leopard having four wings and four heads; but he pronounces it impossible for a goat which at one stage has one horn, and at another four, to agree with a terrible beast which at one period had ten horns! It is, forsooth, easy to harmonize an animal having one horn and four horns, with an animal having four heads and four wings, and no horns at all; but impossible to believe that a goat having one horn, and afterward four horns, can agree with a beast having ten horns! Such inconsistency cannot be based upon sound hermeneutical principles. See Zöckler on Daniel in loco, translated and annotated by Strong in the American edition of Lange's Bibelwork.

denoted by the trumpets are substantially identical with the plagues denoted by the vials of wrath. A contrary opinion would make the case a remarkable exception to the analogy of prophecy, and should not be accepted without the most convincing reasons.

2. Figurative and Symbolical Style of Prophecy.

Imagery the most natural form of expressing revelations obtained by visions and dreams.

The fact already observed, that the word of prophecy was received by visions and dreams, and in a state of ecstacy, accounts largely for the further fact that so great a portion of the prophetic Scriptures is set forth in figurative language and in symbol.[1] This important fact is too often overlooked in prophetic interpretation, and hence has arisen the misleading doctrine that prophecy is "history written beforehand." Accepting such an idea, one is prone to press the literal meaning of all passages which may, by any possibility, admit of such a construction; and hence the endless controversies and vagaries in the exposition of the prophetical Scriptures. But observe for a moment the style and diction of the great predictions. The first one on record announces a standing enmity between the serpent and the woman and their progeny; and, addressing the serpent, God says: "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii, 15). There have not been wanting literalists who have applied the prophecy to the enmity between men and serpents, and who declare that it is fulfilled whenever a serpent bites a man, or whenever a man crushes a serpent's head. But such an interpretation of the passage has never been able to command any general acceptance. Its deeper import respecting the children of light and the children of darkness, and

[1] The fundamental reason of the figurative style, which is so prominent a characteristic of prophecy, must be sought in the mode of revelation by vision. In the higher species of prophecy, which was connected with no ecstatic elevation on the part of the writer, but with his ordinary frame of mind; that, namely, of which the most eminent examples are to be found in Moses and Christ; the language employed does not, in general, differ from the style of ordinary discourse. But prophecy, in the more special and peculiar sense, having been not only framed on purpose to veil while it announced the future, but also communicated in vision to the prophets, must have largely consisted of figurative representations; for, as in vision it is the imaginative faculty that is more immediately called into play, images were necessary to make on it the fitting impressions, and these impressions could only be conveyed to others by means of figurative representations. Hence the two, prophetic visions and figurative representations, are coupled together by the prophet Hosea (xii, 10) as the proper correlatives of each other: "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets."—Fairbairn on Prophecy, p. 147.

their respective heads (Messiah and Satan), has been universally recognized by the best interpreters. "It is a sign and witness," says Fairbairn, "set up at the very threshold of the prophetic territory, showing how much prophecy, in the general form of its announcements, might be expected to take its hue and aspect from the occasion and circumstances that gave rise to it; how it would serve itself of things seen and present as a symbolical cover under which to exhibit a perspective of things which were to be hereafter; and how, even when there might be a certain fulfilment of what was written according to the letter, the terms of the prediction might yet be such as to make it evident that something of a higher kind was required properly to verify its meaning. Such plainly was the case with respect to the prediction at the fall; and in proof that it must be so read and understood, some of the later intimations of prophecy, which are founded upon the address to the serpent, vary the precise form of the representation which they give of the ultimate termination of the conflict. Thus Isaiah, when descanting on the peace and blessedness of Messiah's kingdom, tells us not of the serpent's head being bruised, but of his power to hurt being destroyed; of dust being his meat, and of the child playing upon his hole (chapters xi, 8, 9; lxv, 25). It is the same truth again that appears at the close of the Apocalypse under the still different form of chaining the old serpent, and casting him into the bottomless pit, that he might not deceive the nations any more (Rev. xx, 2, 3); his power to deceive in the one case corresponding to his liberty to bruise the heel in the other, and his being chained and imprisoned in the bottomless pit to the threatened bruising of his head." [1]

Fairbairn on Gen. iii, 15.

In like manner we note that Jacob's dying prophecy (Gen. xlix) is written in the highest style of poetic fervour and of figurative speech. All the events of the patriarch's life and the storied fulness of the future moved his soul, and gave emotion to his words. The oracles of Balaam and the songs of Moses are of the same high order. The Messianic psalms abound with simile and metaphor, drawn from the heavens, the earth, and the seas. The prophetical books are mostly written in the forms and spirit of Hebrew poetry, and, in predictions of notable events, the language often rises to forms of statement, which, to an occidental critic, might seem a hyperbolical extravagance. Take, for example, the following "burden of Babylon" which Isaiah saw (מַשָּׂא), and note the excessive emotion and the boldness of figures (Isa. xiii, 2–13):

Poetic form and style of many prophecies.

[1] Fairbairn on Prophecy, p. 102.

2 On a mountain bare set up a signal;
Lift up a voice to them; wave a hand,
And they shall enter gates of nobles.
3 Also I have called my mighty ones for my anger—
Those that exult proudly in my glory.
4 Voice of a multitude in the mountains, as of much people;
Voice of a tumult of kingdoms of nations assembled,
Jehovah of hosts mustering a host of battle;
5 Coming from a land afar,
From the end of the heavens—
Jehovah and the instruments of his fury,
To lay waste all the land.
6 Howl ye! For near is the day of Jehovah;
As a destruction from Shaddai shall it come.
7 Therefore shall all hands become slack,
And every heart of man shall melt.
8 And they shall be in trepidation;
Writhings and throes shall seize them;
As the travailing woman shall they twist in pain.
Each at his neighbour they shall look astonished,
Their faces, faces of flames.
9 Behold, the day of Jehovah comes;
Cruel—and wrath, and burning of anger,
To make the land a desolation,
And her sinners will be destroyed out of her.
10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations
Shall not shed forth their light;
Dark has the sun become in his going forth,
And the moon will not cause her light to shine.
11 And I will visit upon the world evil,
And upon the wicked their iniquity.
And I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease,
And the haughtiness of the lawless I bring low.
12 I will make men rarer than refined gold,
And mankind than the gold of Ophir.
13 Therefore I will make heaven tremble,
And the land shall shake from her place,
In the overflowing wrath of Jehovah of hosts,
And in the day of the burning of his anger.

Refers to the fall of Babylon.

It has never been questioned by the best interpreters that the above passage refers to the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes. The heading of the chapter, and the specific statements that follow (verses 17, 19), put this beyond all doubt. And yet it is done, according to the prophet, by Jehovah, who musters his host of mighty heroes from the end of the heavens, causes a tumultuous noise of kingdoms of nations, fills human

hearts with trembling, and despair, and throes of agony, shakes heaven and earth, and blots out sun, and moon, and stars. This fearful judgment of Babylon is called "the day of Jehovah," "the day of the burning of his anger." Standing in the forefront of Isaiah's oracles against the heathen world-powers, it is a classic passage of the kind, and its style and imagery would naturally be followed by other prophets when announcing similar judgments.[1]

Such highly emotional and figurative passages are common to all the prophetic writers, but in the so-called apocalyptic prophets we note a peculiar prominence of symbolism. In its earlier and yet undeveloped form it first strikes our attention in the Book of Joel, which may be called the oldest apocalypse. But its fuller development appears among the later prophets, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, and its perfected structure in the New Testament Apocalypse of John. In the exposition, therefore, of this class of prophecies it is of the first importance to apply with judgment and skill the hermeneutical principles of biblical symbolism. This process requires, especially, three things: (1) That we be able clearly to discriminate and determine what are symbols and what are not; (2) that the symbols be contemplated in their broad and striking aspects rather than their incidental points of resemblance; and (3) that they be amply compared as to their general import and usage, so that a uniform and self-consistent method be followed in their interpretation. A failure to observe the first of these will lead to endless confusion of the symbolical and the literal. A failure in the second tends to magnify minute and unimportant points to the obscuring of the greater lessons, and to the misapprehension, oft-times, of the scope and import of the whole. Not a few interpreters have put great stress upon the import of the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan. ii, 41, 42), and have searched to find ten kings to correspond; whereas, from aught that appears to the contrary, the image may have had twelve toes, like the giant of Gath

Prominence of symbols in the apocalyptic books.

Three hermeneutical principles to be observed.

[1] "Such passages," says Fairbairn, "are not to be regarded simply as highly wrought descriptions in the peculiar style of oriental poetry, possessing but a slender foundation of nature to rest upon. On the contrary they have their correspondence in the literature of all nations, and their justification in the natural workings of the human mind; we mean its workings when under circumstances which tend to bring the faculty of imagination into vigorous play, much as it was acted on with the prophets when, in ecstacy, they received divine revelations. For it is the characteristic of this faculty when possessed in great strength, and operated upon by stirring events such as mighty revolutions and distressing calamities, that it fuses every object by its intense radiation, and brings them into harmony with its own prevailing passion or feeling."—Prophecy, p. 158.

(2 Sam. xxi, 20). A care to observe the third rule will enable one to note the differences as well as the likeness of similar symbols, and save him from the error of supposing that the same symbol, when employed by two different writers, must denote the same power, person, or event.

3. Analysis and Comparison of Similar Prophecies.

Not only are the same, or like figures and symbols, employed by different prophets, but also many whole prophecies are so like one another in their general form and import as to require of the interpreter a minute comparison. Thus only can he distinguish things which are alike and things which differ.

Verbal analogies.

First we observe numerous instances in which one prophet appears to quote from another. Isa. ii, 1–4 is almost identical with Micah iv, 1–3, and it has been a problem of critics to determine whether Isaiah quoted from Micah, or Micah from Isaiah, or both of them from an older prophet now unknown. Jeremiah's prophecy against Edom (xlix, 7–22) is appropriated largely from Obadiah. The Epistle of Jude and the second chapter of Peter's Second Epistle furnish a similar analogy. A comparison of the oracles against the heathen nations by Balaam, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as already indicated, shows many verbal parallels. From all which it appears that these sacred writers freely appropriated forms of expression from each other as from a common treasure house.[1] The word of God, once uttered by an inspired man, became the common property of the chosen people, and was used by them as times and occasions served.

Twofold presentation of prophetic revelations.

The twofold presentation of prophetic revelations, both of visions and of dreams, demands particular attention. It is first brought to our attention in the dreams of Joseph and of Pharaoh, and as we have seen above (pp. 306, 307), the double dream was, in its significance, but one, and the repetition under different symbols was the divine method of intensifying the impression, and indicating the certainty of the things revealed. "As to the doubling of the dream to Pharaoh twice, it is because the word (הַדָּבָר, this particular revelation) from God is established, and God is hastening to accomplish it" (Gen. xli, 32). A principle of prophetic interpretation so explicitly enunciated in the earliest records of divine revelation deserves to be made

[1] "Such verbal repetitions," says Hengstenberg, "must not be, by any means, considered as unintentional reminiscences. They served to exhibit that the prophets acknowledged one another as the organs of the Holy Spirit." — Christology, vol. i, p. 291.

prominent.[1] It serves as a key to the explanation of many of the most difficult questions involved in the apocalyptic Scriptures. We shall have occasion to illustrate this principle more fully in treating the visions of Daniel and John.

It is important, furthermore, to study the analogies of imagery in the apocalyptic portions of prophecy. Isaiah's vision of the Seraphim (Isa. vi, 1–8), Ezekiel's vision of the Living Creatures (Ezek. i and x), and John's vision of the throne in heaven (Rev. iv), have manifest relations to one another which no interpreter can fail to observe. The scope and bearing of each can, however, be apprehended only as we study them from the standpoint of each individual prophet. Daniel's vision of the four beasts out of the sea (Dan. vii) furnishes the imagery by which John depicts his one beast out of the sea (Rev. xiii, 1–2), and we note that the one beast of the latter, being a nameless monster, combines also the other main features (leopard, bear, lion) of the four beasts of the former. John's second beast out of the earth, with two horns like a lamb (Rev. xiii, 11), combines much of the imagery of both the ram and the he-goat of Daniel (viii, 1–12). Zechariah's vision of the four chariots, drawn by different coloured horses (vi, 1–7), forms the basis of the symbolism of the first four seals (Rev. vi, 1–8), and John's glowing picture of the New Jerusalem, the new heavens and the new land (xxi, xxii), is a manifest counterpart of the closing chapters of Ezekiel. The most noticeable difference, perhaps, is that Ezekiel has a long and minute description of a temple and its service (xl–xliv), while no temple appears in the vision of John, but rather the city itself becomes all temple, nay, a Holy of Holies, being filled with the glory of God and of the Lamb (Rev. xxi, 3, 22, 23).

Analogies of imagery.

It will be evident from the above-mentioned analogies that no proper interpretation of any one of these similar prophecies can be given without a clear analysis and careful comparison of all. We are not to assume, however, that by the use of the same or similar imagery one prophet must needs refer to the same subject as the other. The two olive trees of Rev. xi, 4 are not necessarily the same as those of Zech. iv, 3, 14. The beasts of John's Apocalypse are not necessarily identical with those of Daniel. John's vision of the new heaven, and the new land, and the golden city, is doubtless a fuller revelation of redeemed Israel than Ezekiel's corresponding vision. But one of these visions cannot be fully expounded without the other, and each should

Similar imagery applied to different subjects.

[1] For many valuable suggestions on what he calls the "Double Allegory," see Cochran, The Revelation of John its Own Interpreter, New York, 1860.

be subjected to a minute analysis, and studied from its own historical or visional standpoint.

General summary.

From these considerations it will also be seen that, while duly appreciating the peculiarities of prophecy, we nevertheless must employ in its interpretation essentially the same great principles as in the interpretation of other ancient writings. First, we should ascertain the historical position of the prophet; next the scope and plan of his book; then the usage and import of his words and symbols; and, finally, ample and discriminating comparison of the parallel Scriptures should be made.

It is, moreover, of the first importance that the interpreter of the prophetic Scriptures keep in mind the following considerations:

1. Old Testament prophecy is but a part of the Old Testament revelation of God, and should ever be studied in the light of the entire Hebrew dispensation. It should also be repeatedly emphasized that history, law, psalm, proverb, and prophecy are so many parts of a series of divine communications given at sundry times, and constituting an organic whole. In the construction of every large building, single parts, when seen alone and separate from the rest, may appear unpleasant to the eye and offensive to the cultured taste, but, when studied in their relation to the entire structure, they are seen to be essential to the support and relief of all. In a like manner should we regard various portions of the composite elements of the Old Testament revelation.

2. Prophecy deals mainly with the persons and events of the times in which it was first uttered. The prophet was a power of God, a living messenger to kings, and peoples, and nations. He voiced God's message for the time, and hence we find the language of Old Testament prophecy full of allusions to contemporary events. Hence also the necessity of extensive and accurate historical knowledge in order to understand and explain the written productions of the ancient seers.

3. The Hebrew prophets also spoke and wrote in the deep consciousness of being oracles of Jehovah, "the Holy One of Israel." They were impelled by the divine Spirit, and rose above the fear of men. And yet they never lost their self-consciousness as human beings, and the divine truths which were given them to communicate to men took outward form in accord with the mental and psychological qualities of each individual prophet. Hence the interpreter should note the personal qualities and characteristic style of each prophet as well as the organic entirety of the Old Testament prophetical literature.

CHAPTER XV.

MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

MESSIANIC prophecy has for its great object the glorious reign of God among men, the consequent overthrow of evil, and the exaltation and blessedness of his people who obey him and love righteousness. This kind of prophecy constitutes a special feature of the Old Testament prophetic revelation, and appears under two forms: first, an impersonal portraiture of a coming kingdom of power and righteousness, in which humanity attains its highest good, and, second, the announcement of a person, the Anointed One, with whom all the triumph and glory are connected. Accordingly we have Messianic prophecies in which the person of Christ receives no mention, and others in which he is emphatically named and represented as the efficient cause of all the glory. Messianic prophecy defined.

Messianic prophecy should be studied on its divine and human sides. Viewed as a part of the divine purpose and plan of redemption, it appears in the course of sacred history as a progressive series of special revelations, gradually unfolding into greater clearness as the ages pass along. We recognize it in the *protevangelium* (Gen. iii, 15), in the promises to Abraham (Gen. xii, 3; xvii, 6; xviii, 18; xxii, 18), in the poetic words of Jacob (Gen. xlix, 10), and the promise of a prophet like Moses (Deut. xviii, 15, 18). It took a more specific form in connection with Nathan's words to David (2 Sam. vii, 12–16), and thereafter the king and the kingdom of righteousness become prominent in the Psalms and the Prophets.[1]

In the interpretation of Messianic prophecies we meet with two schools of extremists. One insists on a literal interpretation of nearly every passage, and accordingly drifts, as by logical necessity, to the teaching of a future temporal restoration of the Jews at Jerusalem, a rebuilding of the temple, and Discard extremists.

[1] On the Messianic prophecies see J. Pye Smith, Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, 3 vols. (Lond., 1829); Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament, 4 vols. (Eng. trans. by Meyer, Edinb., 1863); Tholuck, Die Propheten und ihre Weissagungen, pp. 146–189 (Gotha, 1860); Leathes, Witness of the Old Testament to Christ (Boyle, Lectures for 1868); Riehm, Messianic Prophecy (Eng. trans., Edinb., 1876); Gloag, The Messianic Prophecies, pp. 98–208 (Baird Lecture, Edinb., 1879); Briggs, Messianic Prophecy (New York, 1886); Elliott, Old Testament Prophecy, Part Third, pp. 186–279 (New York, 1889).

renewal of Hebrew ritual and worship. The other spiritualizes all forms of prophetic teaching to an extent that scarcely allows any true historical interpretation. In order to a faithful and satisfactory exposition, we must learn to distinguish, with reasonable clearness, between the forms of speech and the great underlying thought, between the imagery of historical and metaphorical allusion and the essential contents of a prophecy.

Five Messianic prophecies adduced for illustration.

What in each prophecy is mere form, and what is the essential idea, may be best seen by a full collation and comparison of a number of similar prophecies. This is true alike of Messianic and of other great predictions. Our principles may be sufficiently illustrated by attention to the five notable Messianic prophecies which appear in the first twelve chapters of Isaiah. The chronological order of these and other prophecies of the son of Amoz seem to have been made subject to a certain logical order, as if the editing and arranging of the several oracles were governed by the purpose of exhibiting an organic series. In this single series we discover a marked progress of thought from what is at first broad and comparatively indefinite to what is more specific and personal.

The Mountain of Jehovah's House.

The first in order is the prophecy of the mountain of Jehovah's house (Isa. ii, 2–4). This passage is identical with Micah iv, 1–3, but whether Isaiah quoted it from Micah (Gesenius, Henderson), or Micah from Isaiah (Vitringa, Lowth), or both from an older writer now unknown (Rosenmüller, Knobel), cannot be positively determined. Hitzig and Ewald think that it was taken by both prophets from a lost work of Joel; but this is a pure conjecture. Isaiah seems to have cited it as a text on which to base an appeal to the house of Jacob (comp. ii, 5–iv, 6), first announcing the glorious future in the language of another, and then proceeding to show that Judah and Jerusalem must be purged with burning blasts of judgment, so that only a chosen remnant will attain the golden age (comp. iv, 2–6). We render the passage as follows:

2 And it shall come to pass in the end of days,
The mountain of Jehovah's house shall be
Established in the summit of the mountains,
And it shall be exalted from the hills,
And unto it shall all the nations flow.
3 And many peoples shall go there and say:
Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah,
Unto the house of the God of Jacob;
And he will teach us of his ways,

And let us go on in his paths,
For out of Zion shall go forth a law
And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.
4 And he will judge between the nations,
And unto many peoples give rebuke;
And into plowshares they will beat their swords,
And their spears into pruning-knives;
Nation toward nation will not lift a sword,
And they no longer will be learning war.

According to the rules already enunciated we should first endeavour to distinguish that which is essential from that which is merely formal. A literal interpretation would here evidently involve insuperable difficulties, not to say absurdities. Who will urge that Mount Zion or Moriah is yet to be heaved up to a natural elevation higher than all other mountains of the earth, and that all the nations of men are as such to flow upward to it? Or who will insist that in order to the true fulfilment of this prophecy swords and spears must be literally and actually converted into other implements as here described? The true interpretation must be sought by a rational elimination of the main thoughts from the ideal forms of their Jewish imagery. The author was a Jew, and associated the highest hopes of his nation with a glorification of the holy mountain of Jehovah's temple. We should not, however, spiritualize all these Jewish forms of conception, and run into fanciful allegorical interpretations of particular words. In the very drapery of his thought we recognize the natural limitations of the prophet and trace the historical realism of the Old Testament religion.

Let us now inquire after the essential contents and the corresponding essential prophetic thoughts of this passage. Beyond question the four main ideas are (1) the temple-mountain (including Zion) is to be exalted into prominence above all other hills; (2) Jerusalem will be the source of law and revelation; (3) there will be a confluence of all nations thither; (4) universal peace is to be effected by divine judgment among the nations. These essential contents furnish a clear prediction of four great corresponding facts, which are fulfiled in the origin and propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They may be thus formulated: (1) Jerusalem occupies a conspicuous historical, geographical, and religious position in the origin and development of the kingdom of God on earth; (2) the Gospel is a republication and enlargement of the law and word of Jehovah, having issued from Jerusalem as a geographical and historical starting point (comp. Luke xxiv, 47); (3) the nations will acknowledge and accept the truths and excellencies of this new

and higher revelation; (4) the ultimate result will be universal peace among the nations. By this method of interpretation we show due regard to the language and thought of the writer, avoid the unnatural extremes of literalism, allow no fanciful allegorizing, and obtain a result which is at once simple, clear, self-evidencing as a truthful exposition, and confirmed by manifest New Testament fulfilment.

The Branch of Jehovah.

The prophecy of the Branch of Jehovah in Isa. iv, 2–6 is a counterpart of that of chap. ii, 2–4. The one opens, the other closes, the appeal to the house of Jacob. The one presents an outward historical picture, the other an inner view of the redemption of the true Israel. The one should be compared with the parable of the mustard seed, the other with the parable of the leaven (Matt. xiii, 31–33).

2 In that day shall the Branch of Jehovah become a splendour and a glory,
And the fruit of the land a majesty and a beauty to the escaped of Israel;
3 And he that is left in Zion and he that remains[1] in Jerusalem
Shall be called holy to him—all who are written for life in Jerusalem.
4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion,
And the blood-drops of Jerusalem he will cleanse away from her midst,
By the blast of judgment and by the blast of burning,
5 Then will Jehovah create over the whole site of Mount Zion, and over her assembly,
A cloud by day and the brightness of a fire-flame by night[2]
For over all the glory (there will be) a covering,
6 And a booth[3] shall become a shade by day from heat,
And a refuge and shelter from storm and from rain.

The "Branch of Jehovah" and the "fruit of the land" are explained by Ewald, Cheyne and others as the natural wealth and produce of Israel's land; that is, immense and glorious harvests to be given as blessings from Jehovah. This, indeed, might furnish a worthy prophetic picture of the Messianic age and be explained like the similar imagery of chap. xxxv, 1, 2. Gesenius understands by

[1] Observe the three different words here used to denote the surviving remnant, פְּלֵיטָה, *one who escapes*, or that which escapes destruction; נִשְׁאָר; *one who is left over*, a survivor; נוֹתָר, *one who remains*, or is left behind.

[2] Observe the allusion to the pillar of cloud and fire which accompanied Israel in the desert (Exod. xiii, 21).

[3] Comp. Rev. vii, 15: "He that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them."

the branch the chosen remnant, the new growth of Israel after the chastening judgments; but this confuses things which the sacred writer distinguishes in the immediate context. We prefer with most interpreters to understand an individual, as in Jer. xxiii, 5; xxxiii, 15; Zech. iii, 8; vi, 12, where the same word (צֶמַח) is employed. This Branch is here represented as at once a sprout of Jehovah and a growth of the land of Israel, a somewhat dim but very suggestive intimation of the Christ who was at once divine and human.

The essential elements of this prophecy may be presented in four propositions: (1) The filth and crimes of the Jewish people must be put away by burning blasts of judgment; (2) there will be a surviving remnant, known as holy and written unto life; (3) they will enjoy divine protection and care as truly as did God's chosen people at the time of the exodus from Egypt; (4) all this honour, glory, majesty, and beauty will be brought about by, or in some way be most intimately associated with, a remarkable person or power here called a Branch of Jehovah. We need not insist on the personality of this branch, for that is not made prominent in the prophecy, nor should we put forward the twofold allusion in verse 2 as a dogmatic proof-text of the double nature of the Messiah. The entire passage is, accordingly, seen to be a striking prophecy of the judgment, redemption, and glorification of Israel.[1]

Immanuel.

The prophecy of Immanuel in Isa. vii, 14–16 is probably the most difficult and enigmatical of all the Messianic prophecies. This is partly owing to the fact that several expressions in it are capable of more than one interpretation. We translate as follows:

14 Therefore the Lord himself gives you a sign:
Behold, the virgin has conceived,
And is about to bear a son,
And call his name Immanuel.
15 Milk-curd and honey he shall eat,
Till he knows[2] to shun evil and choose good.

[1] "This prediction," says Briggs, "is of great importance. It really opens up two new phases of the Messianic idea. It lays stress upon the discipline of the people of God themselves, and also upon a holy remnant to be redeemed from the fiery trials about to destroy the nation as a whole. A new line is opened for the doctrine of the advent of Jehovah. There is a judgment, not upon the nations as in Joel, but upon perverse Israel after the manner of Hosea. Israel is disciplined and then restored. The restoration is through a fiery trial."—Messianic Prophecy, p. 194.

[2] לְדַעְתּוֹ, *to his knowing*, is best explained as meaning up to the time when he first comes to know enough to distinguish between good and evil. His eating curds and

16 Because before the child shall know
To shun the evil and to choose the good,
Forsaken will that land become,
Before whose two kings thou art filled with fear.

The great questions here are, who is the virgin and who is Immanuel? It must be conceded that the word עַלְמָה, commonly rendered *virgin*, denotes a *young woman* of marriageable age, without determining whether she is married or unmarried. If the virginity of the person designated were intended to be made prominent, it is difficult to conceive why בְּתוּלָה, the specific word for *virgin*, was not employed. Without pausing to examine the non-messianic interpretations,[1] we notice first the view of Ewald and Cheyne, that the prophet expected Messiah's advent within a few years, and uttered this oracle more for the benefit of his own disciples than for Ahaz, who was already judicially hardened. The virgin was, accordingly, the mother of the Messiah, but unmarried and, indeed, unknown. This view, however, which maintains that Isaiah's hope and prophecy were not fulfiled, empties the Scripture of all worthy significance, and will always be unsatisfactory to evangelical believers. It is out of harmony with the solemn and emphatic manner in which the prophet uttered the divine word. Others (Junius, Calvin) have maintained that two different children are to be understood, and that verse 14 refers to the Messiah and verse 16 to the prophet's son Shearjashub, or to some other child then living. This, however, involves a most unnatural violence. Such a sudden change of reference to another child would have required a more specific form of statement. The most common Messianic interpretation maintains that the prophecy was fulfiled first and only by the birth of Jesus, and is so regarded in Matt. i, 22, 23. It is affirmed that the prediction concerning the forsaking of the land was truly fulfiled in the time of Ahaz, and the birth of Immanuel was a sign only in a sense in which something occurring long after may be called a sign. This, however, is the weak point in the current Messianic explanation. No expositor has succeeded in showing

honey up to that time denotes that until then the land will not be cultivated, but used only for pasturing cattle, and the food will consist only of milk-curds and wild honey, though these may be abundant. This is seen more fully from what is said in verses 21–25.

[1] These are at least five in number: (1) The virgin was Ahaz' wife, and the son Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii, 2); (2) Isaiah's wife (Hitzig, Gesenius, Knobel); (3) a princess of Ahaz' court and family, unmarried but with child (Nägelsbach); (4) the Jewish people considered as the bride of Jehovah (Hofmann, Weir, Köler); (5) an ideal person—hypothetical case of any young woman who was about to become a mother (Eichhorn, Michaelis, W. R. Smith).

how an event destined to occur centuries later could serve as a sign to Ahaz or to any one living at that period; nor can such a theory be reconciled with a sound belief in the sacred truthfulness of prophecy. The case of Moses (Exod. iii, 12), often cited, is by no means parallel, for Moses had already witnessed the sign of the burning bush, and he led the people out of Egypt, and served God upon that mountain within a short time after the assurance had been given him. But for Israel to have come to Sinai for the first time some seven hundred years afterward could have been no sign to Moses. Moreover, the language of Isa. vii, 14–16 cannot without flagrant violence be explained as referring to an event of the far future. He says that the virgin is about to bear a son, and before the child shall grow up to years of moral accountability the land of Syria and Ephraim (comp. verses 4–9), before whose two kings Ahaz was filled with trembling, should be abandoned. To suppose in the face of this statement that the land was indeed forsaken within the specified time, but that the child was not born until seven centuries later, is exceedingly unnatural, not to say preposterous.

It remains, therefore, that we understand the prophecy to have been truly fulfiled in the time of Ahaz and Isaiah by the birth of a child who was a type of the Messiah. This does not involve the doctrine of a double sense in the Scripture. The language has no double or occult meaning. Its application to Christ in Matt. i, 23 is to be explained typically, just as we explain the passage cited from Hosea in Matt. ii, 15. The most simple explanation is that which identifies the virgin with the prophet's young wife, called in chap. viii, 3 *the prophetess*, and the child Immanuel is no other than Maher-shalal-hash-baz, whose name and birth were so solemnly attested (see chap. viii, 1–3). We understand this latter as but another symbolical name of the child Immanuel, for the same great sign is to be at once a proof that GOD IS WITH his people, and that he also HASTENS THE SPOLIATION of the two kingdoms of which Ahaz was so much afraid. In less than three years from the beginning of Ahaz' reign, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, broke the power of Damascus, and spoiled the cities of Ephraim as described in 2 Kings xv, 29; xvi, 9. The language of Isa. viii, 4, when compared with Isa. vii, 16, confirms this interpretation, for it shows that the significant sign, which the child Immanuel was to be to the house of David, was also to be fulfiled in Maher-shalal-hash-baz. This is still further incidentally confirmed by the repetition in Isa. viii, 8 and 10 of the name Immanuel. It may further be shown that the whole passage, beginning with Isa. vi, 1 and ending with

ix, 7 is an apocalypse of symbolical names, in which the prophet's children figure as "signs and portents in Israel" (Isa. viii, 18). The difficulties which some have felt in the way of this exposition, owing to the change of names and appellatives, is obviated when we see that the prophet, in chap. viii, 1–4, following the manner of apocalyptic repetitions, presents the Immanuel revelation of chap. vii, 14–16, from another point of view, and in connection with another symbolical name.

The Galilean King.

The apocalyptic passage beginning with Isa. vi, 1 concludes most magnificently with a prophecy of the Prince of Peace, destined to reign forever (Isa. ix, 1–7; Heb. text, viii, 23—ix, 6). In contrast with the gloom and anguish sure to come on such as reject the "law and testimony" of divine revelation (viii, 20), and resort unto heathen oracles, the light and joy of the true Israel are portrayed. We thus translate :

1 But there shall be no gloom to her who was in straits.
As the former time despised the land of Zebulun and Naphtali,
The latter honours the way of the sea beyond the Jordan,
The circle[1] of the nations.
2 The people who walked in darkness saw great light,
Dwelling in a land of death-shade, light beamed on them.
3 Thou hast increased the nation and magnified its joy,
They have rejoiced before thee like joy in harvest time,
4 Even as men exult when they distribute spoil.
For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor thou hast broken as the day of Midian.[2]
5 For every boot of warrior in the fray, and garment rolled in blood,
Even it shall be for burning, food of fire.
6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us,
And the dominion is upon his shoulder,
And his name is called Pele-yo'ets-'el-gibbor-abi-ad-sar-shalom.[3]
7 Great[4] the dominion, and for peace no end;

[1] Commonly rendered *Galilee*, but, strictly, any circuit of country surrounded by hills; here it is applied to the tribe territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, and afterward to the entire northern section of the Holy Land.

[2] As when Gideon so signally overthrew the hosts of Midian (Judg. vii, 19–25 comp. Psa. lxxxiii, 9; Isa. x, 26).

[3] Consistency of translation and interpretation requires that this symbolical name be retained in the same manner as Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hash-baz in chap. vii, 14; viii, 1, 3. The interpreter is to show that as one means *God with us*, and another, *hasten-spoil, speed-prey*, so this means *wonderful-counsellor, God-hero, father-eternal, prince of peace.*

[4] For לְמַרְבֶּה at the beginning of this verse read רַבָּה. The letters לם have every appearance of a copyist's repetition from the close of the preceding verse.

Over the throne of David and over his kingdom,—
To confirm it and to strengthen it in righteousness and judgment,
Henceforward even unto eternity.
The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.

In this passage the prophet's eye sweeps far beyond his own time, and contemplates the Messianic future as a perfected triumph.[1] The essential contents may be stated in seven propositions: (1) The Galilean region, formerly despised, shall in the latter time be greatly honoured (comp. Matt. iv, 14–16); (2) the people formerly in darkness shall see great light; (3) the nation shall be increased and made joyful; (4) their yoke of oppression shall be thrown off as triumphantly as when Gideon defeated Midian; (5) military clothing will be needed no more and be fit only for burning; (6) the Messiah is announced as if already born and bearing a name of manifold significance; (7) he is destined to reign as if over David's throne in righteousness forever. Here we observe how both the kingdom and person of the Messiah are made prominent, and the Christian expositor has no difficulty in showing that the prophecy is wonderfully fulfiled in the birth of Jesus Christ, and his enthronement to reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (1 Cor. xv, 25).

The Shoot of Jesse and the Final Exodus.

The Messianic prophecy and song which occupy Isa. xi and xii are too long for full citation here. We have space only for a statement of the principal Messianic ideals which form the essential prophetic thoughts of the entire passage. (1) The Messiah is a shoot[2] from the stock of Jesse; (2) he is endued with the wise and holy spirit of Jehovah; (3) he is a righteous and holy judge; (4) he is to effect a universal peace like that of Eden; (5) this peace will be accompanied by a universal knowledge of Jehovah; (6) nations and peoples will seek his glorious rest; (7) the result will involve a redemption more glorious than that of the exodus from Egypt; (8) the redeemed people shall triumph over their enemies; (9) all old tribal rivalry and disputes will cease; (10) the song in chap. xii is an ideal Messianic ode of triumph, designed to be analogous to that which Israel sang on the shore of the Egyptian sea after their deliverance from the house of bondage (Exod. xv, 1–19), and should also be compared with the song of Moses and of the Lamb by the glassy sea, in Rev. xv, 2, 3.

[1] Hence the use of the prophetic *perfect* so noticeable in this passage. See Gesenius, Heb. Gram., § 126, 4.

[2] Hebrew חֹטֶר and נֵצֶר, Comp. צֶמַח in chap. iv, 2.

Messianic prophecy an organic series.

The student of prophecy should not fail to notice how largely this last oracle of the five now cited corresponds with the first one (in chap. ii, 2–4), and is a fuller elaboration of its main ideals. It should also be observed that these five Messianic prophecies as here arranged constitute a progressive series, beginning with the comparatively indefinite but comprehensive one of the exaltation of the temple-mountain, and ending with this full and glowing picture of ultimate redemption to be realized in the Son of David's everlasting reign. This organic structure of Messianic prophecy may be exhibited on a broader scale by a collation and comparison of all the Old Testament oracles belonging to this class.

Prompted by the times of the prophet.

Messianic prophecy seems to have been often prompted by the wrongs and discouragements of the times, and was wont to soar above the evils which the prophet saw about him, and idealize a future golden age, in which all such wrongs should be abolished. Accordingly, in portraying the Messianic future, each prophet was naturally limited by his historical position and outlook, and the great events of his own time would give a tone and colour to his language. Thus Isaiah, in chaps. vii–xii, seems to connect the glorification of Israel with the fall of Assyria, as if it were to follow immediately after the next great political catastrophe and commotion among the nations. So the "day of the Lord" is near in the prophets' visions, and out of its darkness and terrors dawns the triumphant reign of the Prince of Peace, whose kingdom is everlasting.

Cast in metaphorical forms.

We observe further how Messianic prophecy appropriates the facts and forms of Old Testament history and theocratic conceptions, and makes them serve the purpose of metaphorical allusion. The Messiah himself is a branch, a shoot, an ensign, a prince, a governor, a king, a judge, a conqueror, a priest, a prophet, etc., and his rule is associated with what is great and noble in Jewish thought. In the foregoing examples we have the Gospel age predicted under the imagery of the temple-mountain exalted above all others, and Zion as the starting-place of a new revelation (chap. ii, 2–4). A chosen remnant is to be the nucleus of the Messianic kingdom (x, 22; xi, 16). The ultimate restoration of the true Israel and their blessedness and glory are set forth under the imagery of the miracles of the exodus (iv, 5, 6; xi, 15, 16). So, too, in other similar Scriptures the ultimate glory is portrayed as a recreation of Jerusalem, and a perfect keeping of new moons and Sabbaths, and, in short, as a new land and heavens (Isa. lxv, 17, 18; lxvi, 22, 23; comp. Ezek. xl–xlviii). It is also noticeable that immortality

and heavenly life are implied rather than expressly announced. Even the new heavens and the new land are an earthly, human picture, and such profound spiritual conceptions as "drawing water from the fountains of salvation" (Isa. xii, 3) are associated with the thought of dwelling in the midst of Zion.

Finally, we may affirm that the formal elements of the great Messianic prophecies are such as to admonish us not to expect their literal fulfilment. It is a morbid and prodigy-loving tendency which searches human history to find minute fulfilments of ancient predictions. One might well infer from the expositions of some writers that the sole essence and value of some Messianic prophecies were dependent on the minute fulfilment of certain details of imagery, which are at most only incidental to the great idea of the prophecy. Thus the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem, meekly riding upon an ass, was truly a fulfiling of the words of Zech. ix, 9, and is so declared by the evangelists (Matt. xxi, 1–9; John xii, 12–16). But to find all or the chief part of the import of Zechariah's prophecy fulfiled in that particular event is to miss the great lesson of the prophet's words, and of Christ's symbolic act. The passage cited by the evangelists is only an incidental part of the composite picture presented by Zechariah, and by no means exhausts its meaning, which is to be found rather in the incarnation, humility, and ultimate triumph of the Christ, of which the incident of his riding into Jerusalem on an ass was itself only a symbol.[1] Not literal but substantial fulfilment of the great ideals of prophecy is therefore to be looked for. It is the lowest and least important kind of prophecy that deals with minute details. Such was Samuel's prediction of what should occur to Saul on his way home after the search for his father's asses (1 Sam. x, 2–7), and its method borders closely on the popular conceptions of fortunetelling. Messianic and apocalyptic prophecy moves in a higher realm of thought.

Not to be literally interpreted.

[1] "That triumphal procession," says Wright, "was not in the main the fact which the prophecy was designed to depict. The prophecy would have been as truly and really fulfiled if the triumphant procession of Palm Sunday had never taken place. That single incident in the life of our Lord is not the point which the prophet had in view. It was rather the whole of the Saviour's life, the entire series of events connected with Christ's first advent, that was presented in one striking picture."—Zechariah and his prophecies, p. 239. Similarly Lowe: "The prophecy was fulfiled by our Lord, when he rode into Jerusalem. But he fulfiled it more in spirit than to the letter; . . . generally, by his own life of humility, and in particular by illustrating to friends and foes, by his symbolical act of riding on an ass, that his kingdom is not of this world."—Hebrew Students' Commentary on Zechariah, p. 89. London, 1882. Comp. Hengstenberg, as quoted, p. 287 above.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD TESTAMENT APOCALYPTICS.

Apocalyptics defined.

Apocalyptics is a theological term of recent origin employed i biblical literature to designate a class of propheti writings which refer to impending or future judg ments, and the final glory of the Messianic kingdom. According t Lücke [1] biblical apocalyptics includes "the sum total of the eschat ological revelations of the Old and the New Testament." Th great theme of all these Scriptures is the holy kingdom of God i its conflict with the godless and persecuting powers of the world– a conflict in which the ultimate triumph of righteousness is assured This form of prophecy may, accordingly, include such Messiani predictions as we have treated in the preceding chapter, but it take a wider range. Exhibiting a view of the world of man which on living above the world, and forecasting the future, may be sup posed to hold, it emphasizes the divine interposition in all the affair of men and nations, and hence it has had a peculiar fascination fo minds anxious to find in the word of God detailed events of histor written beforehand.[2]

In 1 Cor. xiv, 6 the apostle distinguishes between apocalypse an prophecy. One may speak "either in (or by way of) apocalypse or in knowledge, or in prophesying, or in teaching." The apocalyps

[1] Versuch einer vollständigen Einleitung in die Offenbarung des Johannes, p. 2 Second ed., Bonn, 1852. See his whole chapter entitled Erörterung des Begriffs ode Theorie der Apokalyptik, pp. 17–39; and compare Hilgenfeld, Die jüdische Apokalyp tik, Einleitung, pp. 1–16 (Jena, 1857); Düsterdieck, Kritisch-exegetisches Handbuc über die Offenbarung Johannis, pp. 35–46 (Göttingen, 1877); Lange, The Revelatio of John, pp. 1–6. American ed., New York, 1874.

[2] The amount of apocryphal apocalyptical literature still extant is very large, an may be divided into Jewish and Christian apocalyptics. Comp. Lücke, pp. 223–23 Much of it may be properly called Jewish-Christian; but, altogether, it is of littl value in the elucidation of scriptural prophecy, which holds an incomparable eleva tion above it. Lücke and Stuart devote a considerable part of their works on th Apocalypse to an account of these pseudepigraphal books. Hilgenfeld (Jüdisch Apokalyptik, pp. 5–8) disregards entirely the distinction between canonical and apoc ryphal apocalyptics, and treats the books of Daniel, Enoch, Pseudo-Ezra, and th Sibylline Oracles as a precursory history (Vorgeschichte) of Christianity. But mos if not all, of the apocryphal Apocalypses (at least in their present form) are posteric to the Christian Scriptures.

is to be understood especially of the heavenly revelation, in the reception of which the man is passive; prophecy, on the other hand, denotes rather the inspired human activity, the uttering forth of God's truth (see above p. 314). "In prophecy," says Auberlen, "the Spirit of God finds his immediate expression in words; in the apocalypse human language disappears, for the reason given by the apostle (2 Cor. xii, 4): he 'heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' A new element appears here which corresponds to the subjective element of seeing, the vision. The prophet's eye is opened to look into the unseen world; he has intercourse with angels; and as he thus beholds the unseen, he beholds also the future, which appears to him embodied in plastic symbolic shapes as in a dream, only that these images are not the children of his own fancy, but the product of divine revelation adapting itself essentially to our human horizon." [1]

Scope of biblical apocalyptics.

Biblical apocalyptics comprehends that entire series of biblical revelations which accord with the idea of a divine apocalypse as defined above. Its scope is therefore very extensive. From the earliest period of God's revelation of himself to man, apocalyptic disclosures of the divine purposes of righteous judgment and abounding grace served to cheer the hearts of the godly, and to comfort them in times of trial. They were given in many portions and under manifold forms, and helped by their impressive visions to strengthen faith in God. The inspired seer was permitted to look above and beyond the evils of his own time, behold the crucial day of the Lord on the near horizon, and depict an approaching age in which all wrongs should be duly recompensed, and righteousness, glory, and joy become the abiding portion of the people of God.

Formal elements.

Aside from their wealth of tropes and symbols, which they exhibit more than any other class of writings, the apocalyptic prophecies are notable for their highly-wrought artistic arrangement and finish. There appears constantly the double vision of judgment and salvation, and the natural divisions and subdivisions of the principal apocalypses frequently fall into fours and sevens. The double picture of judgment and glory is seen in the two symbols which were placed at the gate of the garden of Eden (Gen. iii, 24). The sword of flame represented the divine justice which demands the punishment of sin, and the cherubim, symbols of endless Edenic life, convey to fallen man the blessed hope of a restored paradise. The communications of God to Noah and

[1] The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John viewed in their mutual Relation, pp. 83, 84. Edinb., 1856.

to Abraham are a series of revelations of judgment and of love. Considerable portions of Isaiah, Amos, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah are cast in apocalyptic form. The book of Joel is perhaps the oldest entire book of this character, and its two main divisions are devoted respectively to the impending judgments and coming glory of Jehovah. It is also noticeable that the successive writers freely appropriate both the language and symbols of their predecessors, and modify or change them to suit the particular revelation each would make known. Isaiah imitates some passages of Joel; Ezekiel draws from both; Zechariah makes much use of Daniel and Ezekiel; and there is scarcely a figure or symbol employed in John's apocalypse which is not appropriated from the Old Testament books.

Hermeneutical principles.

The hermeneutical principles to be observed in the interpretation of apocalyptics are, in the main, the same as those which we apply to all predictive prophecy. But probably no rule or admonition needs more emphasis than that the student closely attend to the formal elements referred to above, and learn to distinguish them from the great thoughts or truths which they serve to embody. The confusing of form and substance has too often loaded the divine revelation with a burden it was never designed to bear, and such a habit is certain to draw a veil over the mind so as to prevent a truthful understanding of important sections of both the Old Testament and the New (comp. 2 Cor. iii, 14). The great apocalypses should be compared with each other, their formal elements carefully noted, and their methods of enunciating great judgments and great triumphs should be made familiar to the mind. We can illustrate these principles only by a discriminating application of them to such books and parts of books as may best serve the purpose of examples. We, accordingly, proceed to examine in this chapter the structure and import of several of the most important apocalyptic portions of the Old Testament, and reserve for a separate chapter the great apocalypse of the New Testament.

The Revelation of Joel.

Analysis of Joel's prophecy.

We first direct attention to the apocalyptic form and method of the Book of Joel. His prophecy is arranged in two leading divisions. The first part consists of a twofold revelation of judgment, each revelation being accompanied by words of divine counsel and promise (chapters i, 1–ii, 27); the second part goes over a portion of the same field again, but delineates more clearly the blessings and triumphs which shall accompany the day of Jehovah (chapters ii, 28–iii, 21; Hebrew text, chapters iii and iv). These two parts may be properly entitled: (1) *Jehovah's impending*

judgments; (2) *Jehovah's coming triumph and glory.* The first may again be subdivided into four sections, the second into three, as follows:

1. Chap. i, 1–12. After the manner of Moses, in Exod. x, 1–6, Joel is commissioned to announce a fourfold plague of locusts. What one swarm leaves behind them another devours (verse 4), until all vegetation is destroyed, and the whole land is left in mourning. This fourfold scourge, as a beginning of sorrows in the impending day of Jehovah, should be compared with the four riders on different coloured horses, and the four horns of Zech. i, 8, 18, the four war chariots of Zech. vi, 1–8, the wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes of Matt. xxiv, 7; Luke, xxi, 10, 11, and the four horses of Rev. vi, 1–8. It is thus a habit of apocalyptics to represent punitive judgments in a fourfold manner.

2. Chap. i, 13–20. After the manner of Jehoshaphat, when the combined forces of Moab, Ammon, and Seir were marching against him (2 Chron. xx, 1–13), the prophet calls upon the priests to lament, and proclaim a fast, and gather the people in solemn assembly to bewail the awful day that is coming as a destruction from Shaddai. Under this head other features of the calamity are incidentally mentioned, as the distress of beasts, cattle, and flock, and the ravages of fire (verses 18–20.)

3. Chap. ii, 1–11. In this section the prophet proclaims the day of Jehovah in still more fearful aspects. Under the blended imagery of darkness, devouring fire, numberless locusts, and rushing armies (all which are represented in a plague of locusts),[1] the earth and the heavens are shaken, and sun, moon, and stars withhold their light. The formal elements of this terrible apocalyptic picture deserve special examination. There are few more sublime descriptions to be found in the literature of the world.

[1] An eyewitness of a plague of locusts, which visited Palestine in 1866, says: "From early morning till near sunset the locusts passed over the city in countless hosts, as though all the swarms in the world were let loose, and the whir of their wings was as the sound of chariots. At times they appeared in the air like some great snowdrift, obscuring the sun, and casting a shadow upon the earth. Men stood in the streets and looked up, and their faces gathered blackness. At intervals those which were tired or hungry descended on the little gardens in the city, and in an incredibly short time all that was green disappeared. They ran up the walls, they sought out every blade of grass or weed growing between the stones, and after eating to satiety, they gathered in their ranks along the ground, or on the tops of the houses. It is no marvel that as Pharaoh looked at them he called them 'this death' (Exod. x, 17). . . . One locust has been found near Bethlehem measuring more than five inches in length. It is covered with a hard shell, and has a tail like a scorpion." —Journal of Sacred Literature for 1866, p. 89. Compare the same Journal for 1865, pp. 235–237.

4. Chap. ii, 12–27. The second portrayal of the great and terrible day is in turn followed by another call to penitence, fasting, and prayer, and also the promise of deliverance and glorious recompense. So the double proclamation of judgment has for each announcement a corresponding word of counsel and hope.

The second part of the prophecy is distinguished by the words, "And it shall come to pass afterward" (וְהָיָה אַחֲרֵי־כֵן), a formula which simply indicates the indefinite future.

1. Chap. ii, 28–32 (Hebrew text, chap. iii). In accordance with the prayer of Moses (Num. xi, 29), Jehovah promises a great outpouring of his Spirit upon all the people, so that all will become prophets. This token of grace is followed by wonders in heaven and earth (מוֹפְתִים, *prodigious signs*, like the plagues of Egypt):

> And I will give wonders in the heavens and in the land,
> Blood, and fire, and columns of smoke;
> The sun shall be turned to darkness,
> And the moon to blood,
> Before the coming of the day of Jehovah—
> The great and the terrible.
> And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name
> of Jehovah shall be saved.
> For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance,
> As Jehovah has said,
> And in the remnant whom Jehovah calls.

2. Chap. iii, 1–17 (Heb. iv, 1–17). The great day of Jehovah will issue in a judgment of all nations (comp. Matt. xxv, 31–46). Like the combined armies of Moab, Ammon, and Seir, which came against Judah and Jerusalem in the time of Jehoshaphat, the hostile nations shall be brought down into "a valley of Jehoshaphat" (verses 2, 12), and there be recompensed according as they had recompensed Jehovah and his people (comp. Matt. xxv, 41–46).

> Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of judgment!
> For near is the day of Jehovah,
> In the valley of judgment (verse 14).

Jehovah, who dwells in Zion, will make that valley—a valley of judgment to his enemies—like another valley of blessings to his people. Comp. 2 Chron. xx, 20–26.

3. Chap. iii, 18–21 (Heb. iv, 18–21). The judgment of the nations shall be followed by a perpetual peace and glory like the composure and rest which God gave the realm of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx, 30). The figures of great plenty, the flowing waters, the fountain proceeding from the house of Jehovah, Judah and

Jerusalem abiding forever, and "Jehovah dwelling in Zion," are in substance equivalent to the closing chapters of Ezekiel and John.

Thus this oldest Apocalypse virtually assumes a sevenfold structure, and repeats its revelations in various forms. The first four sections refer to a day of Jehovah near at hand, an impending judgment, of which the locust scourge had, perhaps, already appeared as the beginning of sorrows; the last three stand out in the more distant future (afterward = the last days, Acts ii, 17). The allusions of the book to events of the reign of Jehoshaphat have led most critics to believe that Joel prophesied soon after the days of that monarch, but beyond those allusions this ancient prophet is unknown. The absence of any thing to determine his historical standpoint, and the far-reaching import of his words, render his oracles a kind of generic prophecy capable of manifold applications.

Joel's prophecy a generic Apocalypse.

Ezekiel's Visions.

The numerous parallels between the Book of Ezekiel and the Revelation of John have arrested the attention of all readers.[1] But the number and extent of Ezekiel's prophecies carry him over a broader field than that of any other apocalyptic seer, so that he combines vision, symbolico-typical action, parable, allegory, and formal prophesying. "Ezekiel's style of prophetic representation," says Keil, "has many peculiarities. In the first place the clothing of symbol and allegory prevails in him to a greater degree that in all the other prophets; and his symbolism and allegory are not confined to general outlines and pictures, but elaborated in the minutest details, so as to present figures of a boldness surpassing reality, and ideal representations which produce an impression of imposing grandeur and exuberant fulness."[2]

Peculiarities of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel's prophecies, like Joel's, may be divided into two parts, the first (chapters i–xxxii) announcing Jehovah's judgments upon Israel and the heathen nations; the second (chapters xxxiii–xlviii) announcing the restoration and final glorification of Israel. The first part, however, is not without gracious words of promise (xi, 13–20; xvii, 22–24), and the second contains the fearful judgment of God (xxxvii, xxxviii) after the manner of the judgment of all nations described in the second part of Joel (iii, 2–14). Our space will permit us only to notice here the closing section of this great apocalypse, which is comprised in chap-

Analysis of Ezekiel's prophecies.

[1] See a list of parallels between Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and John, in the Speaker's Commentary on Ezekiel, pp. 12–16.

[2] Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel, vol. i, p. 9. Edinb., 1876.

ters xl–xlviii, and contains an elaborate vision of the kingdom of God, and is the Old Testament counterpart of the new heaven and new land portrayed in Rev. xxi and xxii. Ezekiel is carried in the visions of God to a very high mountain in the land of Israel (xl, 2; comp. Rev. xxi, 10) and sees a new temple, new ordinances of worship, a river of waters of life, new land and new tribal divisions, and a new city named JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH. The minuteness of detail is characteristic of Ezekiel, and no one would so naturally have portrayed the Messianic times under the imagery of a glorified Judaism as a prophet who was himself a priest. From his historical standpoint, as an exile by the rivers of Babylon, smitten with grief as he remembered Zion, and the ruined city and temple, and the desolated land of Canaan (comp. Psa. cxxxvii), no ideal of restoration and glory could be more attractive and pleasing than that of a perfect temple, a continual service, a holy priesthood, a restored city, and a land completely occupied, and watered by a never-failing river that would make the deserts blossom as the rose.

The new temple, land, and city.

Three different interpretations of these closing chapters of Ezekiel have been maintained. (1) The first regards this description of the temple as a model of the temple of Solomon which was destroyed by the Chaldæans. The advocates of this view suppose that the prophet designed this pattern to serve in the rebuilding of the house of God after the return of the Jews from their exile. (2) Another class of interpreters hold that this whole passage is a literal prophecy of the final restoration of the Jews. At the second coming of Christ all Israel will be gathered out from among the nations, become established in their ancient land of promise, rebuild their temple after this glorious model, and dwell in tribal divisions according to the literal statements of this prophecy. (3) That exposition which has been maintained probably by the majority of evangelical divines may be called the figurative or symbolico-typical. The vision is a Levitico-prophetic picture of the New Testament Church or kingdom of God. Its general import is thus set forth by Keil: "The tribes of Israel which receive Canaan for a perpetual possession are not the Jewish people converted to Christ, but the Israel of God; i. e., the people of God of the new covenant gathered from among both Jews and Gentiles; and that Canaan in which they are to dwell is not the earthly Canaan or Palestine between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, but the New Testament Canaan, the territory of the kingdom of God, whose boundaries reach from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. And the temple upon a very

Interpretation of the closing vision of Ezekiel.

high mountain in the midst of this Canaan in which the Lord is enthroned, and causes the river of the water of life to flow down from his throne over his kingdom, so that the earth produces the tree of life with leaves as medicine for men, and the Dead Sea is filled with fishes and living creatures, is a figurative representation and type of the gracious presence of the Lord in his Church, which is realized, in the present period of the early development of the kingdom of heaven, in the form of the Christian Church, in a spiritual and invisible manner, in the indwelling of the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers, and in a spiritual and invisible operation in the Church, but which will eventually manifest itself when our Lord shall appear in the glory of the Father to translate his Church into the kingdom of glory in such a manner that we shall see the Almighty God and the Lamb with the eyes of our glorified body, and worship before his throne." [1]

This symbolico-typical interpretation recognizes a harmony of Ezekiel's method and style with other apocalyptic representations of the kingdom of heaven, and finds in this fact a strong argument in its favour. The measurements recorded, the ideal character of the tribe divisions, and especially the river of healing waters flowing from the threshold of the temple into the eastern sea, are insuperable difficulties in the way of any literal exposition of the vision. The modern chiliastic notion of a future return of the Jews to Palestine, and a revival of the Old Testament sacrificial worship, is opposed to the entire genius and spirit of the Gospel dispensation.[2]

Revelation of Daniel.

Principles illustrated by Daniel's double revelation of empires.

All interpreters agree that the empires or world-powers denoted by the various parts of the great image in Dan. ii, 31–45, and by the four beasts from the sea (Dan. vii), are the same. The prophecy is repeated under different symbols, but the interpretation is one. This double revelation, then, will be of special value in illustrating the hermeneutical principles already enunciated. But in no portion of Scripture do we need to exercise greater discrimination and care. These prophecies, in their details, have been variously understood, and the most able and accomplished exegetes have differed widely in their explanations. And not only in matters of minor detail, but there prevails, even to this day, a notable divergence of opinion in regard

[1] Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel, vol. ii, p. 425. Edinb., 1876.

[2] For extended arguments in favour of the symbolico-typical, and against the literal, interpretation of Ezek. xl–xlviii, see the commentaries on this prophet by Fairbairn, Schroeder, Cowles, and Currey.

to three out of the four great kingdoms which occupy so prominent a position in the recorded visions and dreams.

Three errors.

A critical study of the current English literature of Daniel's prophecies begets the conviction that three serious errors have had much to do in vitiating the process pursued by a large number of expositors. (1) There appears with many an obvious desire to make the book itself a contribution to apologetics. When the interpretation of any writing is made subservient to such an ulterior polemical purpose, there is usually more than a probability that the interpreter will be too much governed by considerations outside the purpose of pure exegesis. (2) Some writers, observing a remarkable resemblance between the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse of John, rush to the conclusion that the similar symbols of both books must refer to the same great events in the history of the world. This fact of similarity has been construed as if it were in itself a proof that the fourth beast of Dan. vii, is identical with the first beast of Rev. xiii, 1–10, and the little horn of Dan. vii, and the second beast of Rev. xiii, 11–18 are both alike symbols of the papacy of Rome. (3) There is, further, a singularly persistent presumption that the Book of Daniel, and also the Apocalypse of John, may reasonably be expected to contain an outline history of European politics, and the chronicles of ancient, mediæval, and modern times have been ransacked, and even tortured, to find the ten kings referred to by the prophet. One is amazed at the amount of imperious dogmatism which often appears in the works of some who follow these erroneous methods.

It must be conceded, therefore, that a faithful exposition of Daniel requires the most painstaking care. All dogmatism must be set aside, and we should endeavour to place ourselves in the very position of the prophet, and study with minute attention his language and his symbols. Where such wide differences of opinion have prevailed we cannot for a moment allow any *a priori* assumptions of what ought to be found in these prophecies, or of what ought not to be found there.[1] All such assumptions are fatal to

[1] The Roman Empire, the papacy, the Momammedans, the Goths and Vandals, the French Revolution, the Crimean War, the United States of America, and our late civil war between the North and the South, have all been assumed to have such an importance in the history of humanity and of the Gospel that we should expect to find some notice of them somewhere in the prophets of the Bible. Daniel and the Revelation of John, abounding as they do in vision and symbol, have been searched more than other prophecies with such an expectation. We find even Barnes writing as follows: "The Roman Empire was in itself too important, and performed too important an agency in preparing the world for the kingdom of the Redeemer, to be omitted in such an enumeration."—Notes on Dan. ii, 40, p. 147. On the same principle we

sound interpretation. The prophet should be permitted, as far as possible, to explain himself; and the interpreter should not be so full of ideas drawn from profane history, or from remote ages and peoples, as to desire to find in Daniel what is not manifestly there. Especially when it is a notable fact that profane history knows nothing of Belshazzar,[1] or of Darius the Mede, should we be cautious how far we allow our interpretation of other parts of Daniel to be controlled by such history.

Three different interpretations of Daniel's vision of the four world-powers have long prevailed. According to the first and oldest of these, the fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire; another identifies it with the mixed dominion of Alexander's successors, and a third makes it include Alexander and his successors.[2] Those who adopt this last view regard the Median rule of Darius at Babylon (Dan. v, 31) as a distinct dynasty. The four kingdoms, according to these several expositions, may be seen in the following outline:

Three different interpretations.

1st.	2d.	3d.
1. Babylonian.	1. Babylonian.	1. Babylonian.
2. Medo-Persian.	2. Medo-Persian.	2. Median.
3. Græco-Macedonian.	3. Alexander.	3. Persian.
4. Roman.	4. Alexander's successors.	4. Græco-Macedonian.

Any one of these views will suffice to bring out the great ethical and religious lessons of the prophecy. No doctrine, therefore, is affected,

might insist that the Chinese Empire, with its great dynasties, and countless millions of people, and also those of India and Japan, should also have some kind of notice. We have no right to assume in advance what Daniel's vision or Nebuchadnezzar's dream should contain.

[1] This fact greatly puzzled all expositors until an inscription discovered on a cylinder at Mugheir showed that a *Bel-shar-uzur* was associated with his father as co-regent at Babylon. See Rawlinson, Ancient Monarchies, vol. iii, p. 70. New York, 1871.

[2] The first of these views is ably defended by Barnes, Pusey, and Keil, and is the one held, probably, by most evangelical divines. The second has its ablest advocates in Bertholdt, Stuart, and Cowles. The third is maintained by Eichhorn, Lengerke, Maurer, Bleek, De Wette, Hilgenfeld, Kranichfeld, Delitzsch, and Westcott. It is quite possible that the prevalence among English expositors of the first theory is largely, if not mainly, due to the fact that the arguments in its favour have been scattered broadcast by the popular commentaries, and the able expositions of the other theories have been quite generally inaccessible to English readers. Many have accepted the current exposition because they never had a better one clearly set before them. It is almost amusing to hear some of the advocates of the Roman theory saying, with Luther: "In this interpretation and opinion all the world are agreed, and history and fact abundantly establish it" (see Keil, p. 245). Desprez is equally interesting when he says: "The almost unanimous opinion of modern criticism is in favour of a separate Median kingdom, distinct from the united Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus"—Daniel and John, p 50.

whichever interpretation we adopt. The question at issue is purely one of exegetical accuracy and self-consistency: Which view best satisfies all the conditions of prophet, language, and symbol?

Argument in favour of the Roman theory.

Great stress has been laid by the advocates of the Roman theory upon three considerations: (1) First they urge that Rome was too important to be left out of sight in such a vision of world-empire. "The Roman kingdom," says Keil, "was the first universal monarchy in the full sense. Along with the three earlier world-kingdoms, the nations of the world-historical future remained still unsubdued."[1] But such presumptions cannot properly be allowed to weigh at all. It matters not in the least how great Rome was, or how important a place it occupies in universal history. The sole question with the interpreter of Daniel must be, What world-powers, great or small, fell within his circle of prophetic vision? This presumption in favour of Rome is more than offset by the consideration that geographically and politically that later empire had its seat and centre of influence far aside from the territory of the Asiatic kingdoms. But the Græco-Macedonian Empire, in all its relations to Israel, and, indeed, in its principal component elements, was an Asiatic, not a European, world-power. The prophet, moreover, makes repeated allusion to kings of Greece (יָוָן, *Javan*), but never mentions Rome.

Iron strength and violence.

(2) It is further argued that the strong and terrible character of the fourth kingdom is best fulfilled in Rome. No previous dominion, it is said, was of such an iron nature, breaking all things in pieces.[2] Here again we must insist that the question is not so much whether the imagery fits Rome, but whether it may not also appropriately depict some other kingdom. The description of iron strength and violence is, no doubt, appropriate to Rome, but for any one to aver that the conquests and rule of Alexander and his successors did not "break in pieces and bruise" (Dan. ii, 40), and trample with terrible violence the kingdoms of many nations, is to exhibit a marvellous obtuseness in reading the facts of history. The Græco-Macedonian power broke up the older civilizations, and trampled in pieces the various elements of the Asiatic

[1] Biblical Commentary on Daniel, p. 267. English translation. Edinburgh, 1872.

[2] "Neither the monarchy of Alexander," says Keil (p. 252), "nor the Javanic world-kingdom accords with the iron nature of the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron, breaking all things in pieces, nor with the internal division of this kingdom, represented by the feet consisting partly of iron and partly of clay, nor finally with the ten toes formed of iron and clay mixed." Such an assertion from a commentator usually so guarded and trustworthy inclines one to believe that its author was here labouring under the blinding effects of a foregone conclusion.

monarchies more completely than had ever been done before. Rome never had any such triumph in the Orient, and, indeed, no great Asiatic world-power, comparable for magnitude and power with that of Alexander, ever succeeded his. If now we keep in mind this utter overthrow and destruction of the older dynasties by Alexander, and then observe what seems especially to have affected Daniel, namely, the wrath and violence of the "little horn," and note how, in different forms, this bitter and relentless persecutor is made prominent in this book (chapters viii and xi), we may safely say that the conquests of Alexander, and the blasphemous fury of Antiochus Epiphanes, in his violence against the chosen people, amply fulfilled the prophecies of the fourth kingdom.

(3) It is also claimed that the Roman theory is favoured by the statement, in chap. ii, 44, that the kingdom of God should be set up "in the days of those kings." For the Roman Empire, it is urged, ruled Palestine when Christ appeared, and all the other great monarchies had passed away. But on what ground can it be quietly assumed that "these kings" are Roman kings? If we say that they are kings denoted by the toes of the image, inasmuch as the stone smote the image on the feet (ii, 34), we involve ourselves in serious confusion. The Christ appeared when Rome was in the meridian of her power and glory. It was three hundred years later when the empire was divided, and much later still when broken in pieces and made to pass away. But the stone smote not the legs of iron, but the feet, which were partly of iron and partly of clay (ii, 33, 34). When, therefore, it is argued that the Græco-Macedonian power had fallen before the Christ was born, it may on the other hand be replied with greater force that a much longer time elapsed after the coming of Christ before the power of Rome was broken in pieces.

Evidently, therefore, no satisfactory conclusion can be reached as long as we allow ourselves to be governed by subjective notions of the import of minor features of the symbols, or by assumptions of what the prophet ought to have seen. The advocates of the Roman theory are continually laying stress upon the supposed import of the *two* arms, and *two* legs, and *ten* toes of the image; whereas these are merely the natural parts of a human image, and necessary to complete a coherent outline. The prophet lays no stress upon them in his exposition, and it is nowhere said that the image had *ten* toes. We must appeal to a closer view of the prophet's historical standpoint and his outlying field of vision; and especially should we study his visions in the

Subjective presumptions must be set aside.

light of his own explanations and historical statements, rather than from the narratives of the Greek historians.

Daniel's historical standpoint.

Applying principles already sufficiently emphasized, we first attend to Daniel's historical position. At his first vision Nebuchadnezzar was reigning in great splendour (Dan. ii, 37, 38). At his second, Belshazzar occupied the throne of Babylon (vii, 1). This monarch, unknown to the Greek historians, fills an important place in the Book of Daniel. He was slain in the night on which Babylon was taken, and the kingdom passed into the hand of Darius the Mede (v, 30, 31). Whatever we may think or say, Daniel recognizes Darius as the representative of a new dynasty upon the throne of Babylon (ix, 1). The prophet held a high position in his government (vi, 2, 3), and during his reign was miraculously delivered from the den of lions. Darius the Mede was a monarch with authority to issue prolamations "to all people, nations, and languages that dwelt in all the land" (vi, 25). From Daniel's point of view, therefore, the Median domination of Babylon was no such insignificant thing as many expositors, looking more to profane history than to the Bible itself, are wont to pronounce it. Isaiah had foretold that Babylon should fall by the power of the Medes (Isa. xiii, 17; xxi, 2), and Jeremiah had repeated the prophecy (Jer. li, 11, 28). Daniel lived to see the kingdom pass into the hands of Cyrus the Persian, and in the third year of his reign received the minute revelation of chapters x and xi touching the kings of Persia and of Greece. Already, in the reign of Belshazzar, had he received specific revelations of the kings of Greece who were to succeed the kings of Media and Persia (viii, 1, 21). But no mention of any world-power later than Greece is to be found in the Book of Daniel. The prophetic standpoint of chap. viii is Shushan, the throne-centre of the Medo-Persian dominion, and long after the Medes had ceased to hold precedence in the kingdom. All these things, bearing on the historical position of this prophet, are to be constantly kept in view.

Prominence of the Medes in Scripture.

The varied but parallel descriptions.

Having vividly apprehended the historical standpoint of the writer, we should next take up the prophecies which he has himself most clearly explained, and reason from what is clear to what is not clear. In the explanation of the great image (ii, 36–45), and of the four beasts (vii, 17–27), we find no mention of any of the world-powers by name, except Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar (ii, 38). But the description and explanation of the fourth beast, in vii, 17–27, correspond so fully with those of the he-goat in chap. viii as scarcely to leave any rea-

sonable ground to doubt that they are but varied portraitures of the same great world-power, and that power is declared in the latter chapter to be the Grecian (viii, 21). In chap. xi, 3 the Grecian power is again taken up, its partly strong and partly brittle character (comp. Dan. ii, 42) is exhibited, together with the attempts of the rival kings to strengthen themselves by intermarriage (comp. ii, 43 and xi, 6), and also the conflicts of these kings, especially those between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids. At verse 21 is introduced the "vile person" (נִבְזֶה, *despised* or *despicable one*), and the description through the rest of the chapter of his deceit and cunning, his violence and his sacrilegious impiety, is but a more fully detailed picture of the king denoted by the little horn of chapters vii and viii. As the repetition of Joseph's and Pharaoh's dreams served to impress them the more intensely, and to show that the things were established by God (Gen. xli, 32), so the repetition of these prophetic visions under different forms and imagery served to emphasize their truth and certainty. There appears to be no good ground to doubt that the little horn of chap. viii, and the vile person of chap. xi, 21, denoted Antiochus Epiphanes. We have shown above (pp. 318, 319.) that the reasons commonly alleged to prove that the little horn of chap. viii denotes a different person from the little horn of chap. vii are superficial and nugatory. It follows, therefore, that the fourth kingdom described in chapters ii, 40 ff., vii, 23 ff., is the same as the Grecian kingdom symbolized by the he-goat in chap. viii. The repetitions and varied descriptions of this tremendous power are in perfect accord with other analogies of the style and structure of apocalyptic prophecy.

If we have applied our principles fairly thus far, it now follows that we must find the four kingdoms of Daniel between Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great, including these two monarchs. Reasoning and searching from Daniel's position, and by the light of his own interpretations, we are obliged to adopt the third view named above, according to which the four kingdoms are, respectively, the Babylonian, the Median, the Persian, and the Græco-Macedonian. We have been able to find but two real arguments against this view, namely, (1) the assumption that the Median rule of Babylon was too insignificant to be thus mentioned, and (2) the statement of chap. viii, 20 that the ram denoted the kings of Media and Persia. The first argument should have no force with those who allow Daniel to explain himself. He clearly recognizes Darius the Mede as the successor of Belshazzar on the throne of Babylon (v, 31). This Darius was "the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes"

The prophet should be allowed to explain himself.

(ix, 1), and though he reigned but two years, that reign was, from the prophet's standpoint, as truly a new world-power at Babylon as if he had reigned fifty years. Whatever his relation to Cyrus the Persian, he set a hundred and twenty princes over his kingdom (vi, 1), and assumed to issue decrees for "all people, nations, and languages" (vi, 25, 26). Most writers have seemed strangely unwilling to allow Daniel's statements as much weight as those of the Greek historians, who are notably confused and unsatisfactory in their accounts of Cyrus and of his relations to the Medes.

The prophet's point of view in Dan. viii.

The other argument, namely, that in chap. viii, 20, the two-horned ram denotes "the kings of Media and Persia," is very properly supposed to show that Daniel himself recognised Medes and Persians as constituting one monarchy. But this argument is set aside by the fact that the position of the prophet in chap. viii is Shushan (ver. 2), the royal residence and capital of the later Medo-Persian monarchy (Neh. i, 1; Esther i, 2). The standpoint of the vision is manifestly in the last period of the Persian rule, and long after the Median power at Babylon had ceased to exist. The Book of Esther, written during this later period, uses the expression "Persia and Media" (Esther i, 3, 14, 18, 19), thus implying that Persia then held the supremacy. The facts, then, according to Daniel, are that a Median world-power succeeded the Babylonian; but that, under Cyrus the Persian, it subsequently lost its earlier precedence, and Media became thoroughly consolidated with Persia into the one great empire known in other history as the Medo-Persian.

Inner harmony of all the visions to be sought.

With this view all the prophecies of Daniel readily harmonize. According to chap. ii, 39, the second kingdom was inferior to that of Nebuchadnezzar, and in vii, 5, it is represented by a bear raised up on one side, and holding three ribs between his teeth. It has no prominence in the interpretation given by the prophet, and nothing could more fitly symbolize the Median rule at Babylon than the image of a bear, sluggish, grasping, and devouring what it has, but getting nothing more than its three ribs, though loudly called on to "arise and devour much flesh." No ingenuity of critics has ever been able to make these representations of the second kingdom tally with the facts of the Medo-Persian monarchy. Except in golden splendour this latter was in no sense inferior to the Babylonian,[1] for its dominion was

[1] Calvin, Auberlen, and others think the Medo-Persian was inferior *in moral condition* to the Babylonian. But surely the Persian monotheism was far higher in point of moral and religious worth than the polytheism of Babylon. Keil and others find the inferiority of the Medo-Persian monarchy in its *want of inner unity*, the combina-

every way broader and mightier. It was well represented by the fleet leopard with the four wings and four heads which, like the third kingdom of brass, acquired wide dominion over all the earth (comp. ii, 39, and vii, 6), but not by the sluggish, half-reclining bear, which merely grasped and held the ribs put in its mouth, but seemed indisposed to arise and seek more prey.

Those interpreters who adopt the second view above named, and, distinguishing between Alexander and his successors, make these latter constitute the fourth kingdom, have brought most weighty and controlling arguments against the first or Roman theory,[1] showing that chronologically, geographically, politically, and in relation to the Jewish people, the Roman Empire is excluded from the range of Daniel's prophecies. "The Roman Empire," says Cowles, "came into no important relations to the Jews until the Christian era, and never disturbed their repose effectually until A. D. 70. . . . Rome never was Asiatic, never was oriental; never, therefore, was a legitimate successor of the first three of these great empires. . . . Rome had the seat of her power and the masses of her population in another and remote part of the world."[2]

The Diadochoi theory.

But this second theory is unable to show any sufficient reason for dividing the dominion of Alexander and his successors into two distinct monarchies. According to every proper analogy and implication, the fourth beast with its ten horns and one little horn of chap. vii, and the he-goat with its one great horn and its four succeeding ones, and the little horn out of one of these—as presented in chap. viii, 8, 9, 21–23—all represent but one world-power. From Daniel's point of vision these could not be separated, as the Median domination at Babylon was separated from the Chaldæan on the one side, and the later Medo-Persian on the other. It would be an unwarrantable confusion of symbols to make the horns of a beast represent a different kingdom from that denoted by the beast itself. The two horns of the Medo-Persian ram are not to be so understood, for the Median and Persian elements are, according to chap. viii, 20, symbolized by the whole body, not exclusively by the horns of the ram, and the vision of the prophet is from a standpoint where the Median

Dominion of Alexander and his successors not two different world-powers.

tion of Medes and Persians being an element of weakness. But, from all that appears in history, this combination of two great peoples was an element of might and majesty rather than of weakness or of inferiority.

[1] See Stuart's "Excursus on the Fourth Beast" in his Commentary on Daniel, pp. 205–210. Cowles' Notes on Daniel, pp. 354–371, and Zöckler on Daniel ii and vii in Lange's Biblework, translated and annotated by Strong.

[2] Notes on Daniel vii, 28, p. 355.

and Persian powers have become fully consolidated into one great empire. If, in chap. viii, 8, 9, we regard the goat and his first horn as denoting one world-power, and the four succeeding horns another and distinct world-power, analogy requires that we should also make the ten horns of the fourth beast (vii, 7, 8, 24) denote a kingdom different from the beast itself. Then, again, what a confusion of symbols would be introduced in these parallel visions if we make a leopard with four wings and four heads in one vision (vii, 6) correspond with the one horn of a he-goat in another, and the terrible fourth beast of chap. vii, 7, horns and all, correspond merely with the horns of the goat!

Conclusion.

From every point of view, therefore, we are driven by our hermeneutical principles to hold that view of Daniel's four symbolic beasts which makes them represent, respectively, the Babylonian, the Median, the Medo-Persian, and the Grecian domination of Western Asia. But the "Ancient of days" (vii, 9–12) brought them into judgment, and took away their dominion before he enthroned the Son of man in his everlasting kingdom. The penal judgment is represented as a great assize, the books are opened, and countless thousands attend the bidding of the Judge. The blasphemous beast is slain, his body is destroyed and given to burning flames, and his dominion is rent from him, and consumed by a gradual destruction (verses 10, 11, 26).

The seventy weeks.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks (Dan. ix, 24–27) affords a remarkable side light to the other revelations of this book. It was a special communication to the prophet in answer to his intercession for Jerusalem "the holy mountain," "thy sanctuary," "thy city," and "thy people" (verses 16, 17, 19), and would, therefore, presumably contain some revelation of God's purpose respecting the city and sanctuary which had at that time lain desolate about seventy years. The language of the angel is noticeably enigmatical, and several of the expressions have never been satisfactorily explained; but the obvious import of the passage, taken as a whole, is that both city and sanctuary are to be rebuilt, and yet ultimately to be overwhelmed by a fearful desolation. Moreover, a Messianic Prince is to appear and be cut off, and the outcome of all is "a finishing of the transgression, a completing of sins, an expiation for iniquity, a bringing in of everlasting righteousness, a sealing up of vision and prophet, and the anointing of a Holy of holies." All this strikingly accords with the coming and kingdom of Jesus Christ, the consummation of the Old Testament economy and the introduction of the New. The seventy weeks are a symbolical number (see page 296 above), conceived as broken into three portions of seven,

sixty-two, and one (7+62+1=70). The first seems to refer to the time of rebuilding the city, the second to the period intervening between the restoration and the appearance of Messiah, and the third is the last decisive heptad, in the midst of which a new covenant is confirmed with many, but the end of which is the ruin of city and sanctuary with an unspeakable desolation. The labour of expositors to fix the precise date of the "going forth of a word to return and to build Jerusalem" (verse 25) has failed thus far to reach any result which commands general confidence. The proclamation of Cyrus (Ezra i, 1–4), the decree of Artaxerxes given to Ezra (Ezra vii, 11–26), and that given to Nehemiah (Neh. ii, 5–8) all sufficiently supply the "word to return and build," but no one of these so signally fulfils the prophecy as to establish its claim to be the only one intended by the angel. There is little probability of ever reaching a satisfactory interpretation so long as we insist on finding mathematical precision in the use of symbolical numbers. If the seventy names in Jacob's family record are not to be understood with rigid exactness (see on pp. 406–409), much less are the symbolical numbers which make up these seventy weeks.

The final revelation, contained in Dan. xi, 2–xii, 3, is a fuller delineation of that of chapter viii, but the deliverance of God's people is there shown to include a resurrection from the dead and heavenly beatification. As Isaiah connected the Messianic glorification of Israel with the fall of Assyria (see above, p. 336), overlooking intervening events as if they were hidden between two lofty mountains to which his vision turned, so Daniel makes no note of what other things might follow the fall of the great oppressor, but is told that out of an unspeakable trouble his people shall be delivered, "every one who is found written in the book." With the coming and kingdom of the Son of man, to which all his visions reached, he sees as in one field of view whatever that kingdom assures to the saints of the Most High.

Revelation of xi, 2–xii, 3.

Thus the comparative study of the five great prophecies of the Book of Daniel discloses a harmony of scope and general outline, an internal self-consistency, and a profound conception of the kingdom and glory of God. These facts not only illustrate the methods of apocalyptics, but also confirm the title of this book to a high place among the biblical revelations.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN.

No portion of the Holy Scriptures has been the subject of so much controversy and of so many varying interpretations as the Apocalypse of John. The principal systems of exposition may, however, be reduced to three, which are commonly known as the Preterist, the Continuous-Historical, and the Futurist. The Preterists hold that the larger part of the prophecy of this book was fulfilled in the overthrow of Jerusalem and pagan Rome. The Continuous-Historical school of interpreters find most of these prophecies fulfilled in the history of the Roman Empire and of modern Europe. The Futurists maintain that the book relates mainly to events which are yet to come, and which must be literally fulfilled at the end of the world. Any attempt to discuss these systems in detail, and examine their numerous divergent methods, as carried out by individual expositors, would require a very large volume. Our plan is simply to seek the historical position of the writer, and trace the scope and plan of his book in the light of the hermeneutical principles already set forth. Especially are we to regard the analogy of the apocalyptic scriptures and the general principles of biblical symbolism.

Systems of interpretation.

The writer addresses the book of his prophecy to the churches of seven well-known cities of western Asia, and expressly declares in the opening verses that his revelation is of "things which must shortly come to pass." At the close (chap. xxii, 12, 20) the Alpha and the Omega, who himself testifies all these things, and manifestly aims to make the thought of their imminence emphatic, says: "Behold, I come quickly;" "Yea, I come quickly." The prophet, moreover, is admonished not to seal "the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near at hand" (xxii, 10). Surely, if words have any meaning, and thoughts are capable of emphatic statement, the events contemplated were impending in the near future at the time this book was written.[1] The

Historical standpoint.

[1] The plea of Alford and others that the *ἐν τάχει*, *shortly*, of this book is "a measure by which, not our judgment of its contents, but our estimate of worldly events and their duration, should be corrected," and that the word "confessedly contains, among other periods, a period of a thousand years" (Greek Testament, Proleg. to Rev., chap. viii, §§ 4, 10), is a singular proposition. He might as well have said that

import of all these expressions is in noticeable harmony with our Lord's repeated declaration: "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be accomplished." But when John wrote, the things contemplated were much nearer at hand than when Jesus addressed his disciples on the Mount of Olives.[1]

Plan of the Apocalypse.

After the manner of other apocalypses this book is divisible into two principal parts, which may be appropriately designated, (1) *The Revelation of Christ, the Lamb* (chaps. i–xi), and (2) *The Revelation of the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb* (chaps. xii–xxii). These two parts, after the manner of Daniel's repeated visions, traverse the same field of view, and each terminates in the fall of a great city, and the establishment of the kingdom of God. But each of these parts is divisible again into smaller sections, the first into three, the second into seven. The whole will be apparent in the following outline:

I. Revelation of the Lamb.

1. In the Epistles to the Seven Churches, i–iii.
2. By the Opening of the Seven Seals, iv–vii.
3. By the Sounding of the Seven Trumpets, viii–xi.

II. Revelation of the Bride.

1. Vision of the Woman and the Dragon, xii.
2. Vision of the Two Beasts, xiii.
3. Vision of the Mount Zion, xiv.
4. Vision of the Seven Last Plagues, xv, xvi.
5. Vision of the Mystic Babylon, xvii, xviii.
6. Vision of Parousia, Millennium, and Judgment, xix, xx.
7. Vision of the New Jerusalem, xxi, xxii.

It should be observed that John's Apocalypse is, in its artificial arrangement and finish, the most perfect of all the prophecies. Its

it confessedly contains the "for ever and ever" of chap. xxii, 5. Manifestly the thousand years of chap. xx, 2, like the ages of ages in chaps. xi, 15 and xxii, 5, is a statement that runs far beyond the great catastrophes of the book, and is too exceptional in its nature to be included among the things which were to come to pass quickly.

[1] On the early date of the Apocalypse see Glasgow, The Apocalypse Translated and Expounded, pp. 9–54 (Edinb., 1872); Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity, chap. xxvii (Lond., 1882); and Schaff's new edition of his History of the Christian Church, pp. 834–836. We have already discussed at some length the time of this prophecy (see pp. 135–140), and have shown good reasons for believing that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The preponderance of the best modern criticism is in favour of this view. If now, in harmony with such date, we find the structure and import of the book, as studied in the light of biblical apocalyptics, a self-consistent whole, and meeting signal fulfilment in the ruin of Judaism and the rise of Christianity, the interpretation itself becomes a controlling argument in favour of the early date.

outline and the correlation of its several parts evince that its imagery was most carefully chosen, and yet there is scarcely a figure or symbol that is not appropriated from the Old Testament. The books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah are especially made use of. The number seven is notably prominent—as seven spirits, seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven heads, seven eyes, seven horns, seven plagues. The numbers three, four, ten, and twelve are also used in a significant way,[1] and where symbolical numbers are so frequently used we should at least hesitate about insisting on the literal import of any particular number. Constant reference, therefore, should be had, in the interpretation of this book, to the analogous prophecies of the Old Testament.

Artificial form of the Apocalypse.

Immediately after the opening statements, and the salutation and doxology of verses 4–6, the great theme of the book is announced in this truly Hebraic and emotional style: "Behold he is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see him,[2] and they who pierced him, and all the tribes of the land,[3] shall wail over him" (chap. i, 7). Let it be particularly noted that these words are appropriated substantially from our Lord's discourse (Matt. xxiv, 30): "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the land wail, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory." The words "they who pierced him" are from Zech. xii, 10, and should here be understood not so much of the soldiers

The great Theme of the book.

[1] See Stuart on the "Numerosity of the Apocalypse" in his Commentary, vol. i, pp. 130–149. Comp. Trench, Com. on the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia, pp. 83–91.

[2] To press the literal import of these words, and insist that Christ is to come on a material cloud, and be visible to every person living at one time on the habitable globe, involves manifest absurdities. No person or phenomenon in the clouds of heaven could be visible, at one and the same time, to all the inhabitants of the world. That every one shall at some time see the Son of man is unmistakable doctrine, as is also the statement of 2 Cor. v, 10, that "we must all be manifest before the judgment seat of Christ;" but in an apocalyptic passage like that above, the language is to be understood in general harmony with the temporal and geographical limitations of the prophecy. The statement is no more to be explained literally than that concerning the trembling of the idols of Egypt in Isa. xix, 1, a passage closely parallel with this:

> Behold Jehovah riding on a swift cloud, and coming into Egypt,
> And the idols of Egypt tremble before him,
> And the heart of the Egyptians melt within them.

[3] The common English Version, "all kindreds of the earth," appears to have misled not only many common readers, but even learned commentators. No Hellenist of our Lord's day would have understood *πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς* as equivalent to all nations of the habitable globe. The phrase is traceable to Zech. xii, 12, where all the families of the land of Judah are represented as mourning.

who nailed him to the cross, and pierced his side, as of the Jews, upon whom Peter charged the crime (Acts ii, 23, 36; v, 30), and who had cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. xxvii, 25). To these Jesus himself had said: "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi, 64).

Having announced his great theme, the writer proceeds to record his vision of the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last—an expression taken from Isa. xli, 4; xliv, 6; xlviii, 12. The description of the Son of man is mainly in the language by which Daniel describes the Ancient of days (Dan. vii, 9) and the Son of man (x, 5, 6), but it also appropriates expressions from other prophets (Isa. xi, 4; xlix, 2; Ezek. i, 26, 28; xliii, 2). The seven golden candlesticks remind us of Zechariah's one golden candlestick with its seven lamps (Zech. iv, 2). The meaning of the symbols is given by the Lord himself, and the whole forms an impressive introduction to the seven epistles. These epistles, though written in a most regular and artificial form, are full of individual allusions, and show that there was much persecution of the faithful, and that a momentous crisis was at hand. The various characteristics of the seven Churches may be typical of varying phases of church life and character for subsequent ages, but they are nevertheless distinct portraitures of then existing facts. The mention of Nicolaitans (ii, 6), the faithful martyr Antipas (ii, 13), and the mischievous prophetess Jezebel (ii, 20), is evidence that the epistles deal with actual persons and events, though the names employed are probably symbolical. The warnings, counsels, and encouragements given to these Churches correspond in substance with those our Lord gave to his disciples in Matt. xxiv. He warned them against false prophets, told them they should have tribulation, and some would be put to death, and the love of many would wax cold, but that he who endured to the end should be saved. It is not to be supposed that in this remoteness of time we can feel the force of the personal allusions of these epistles as well as those to whom they were first addressed.

Words to the Seven Churches.

The prophecy of the seven seals is opened by a glorious vision of the throne of God (chap. iv), and its symbols are taken from the corresponding visions of Isa. vi, 1–4, and Ezek. i, 4–28. Then appears in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book close sealed with seven seals (v, i). The Lion of Judah, the Root of David, is the only one who can open that book, and he is revealed as "a Lamb standing as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes." His position was "in

The Seven Seals.

the midst of the throne" (v, 6). The eyes and horns, symbols of the perfection of wisdom and power, the appearance of a slain lamb, expressive of the whole mystery of redemption, and the position in the throne,[1] as suggestive of heavenly authority—all serve to extol the Christ as the great Revealer of divine mysteries. The first four seals correspond virtually with the symbols of Zech. vi, 2, 3, and denote dispensations of conquest, bloodshed, famine, and aggravated slaughter or mortality.[2] These rapidly successive and commingling judgments correspond strikingly with our Lord's prediction of wars and rumours of wars, falling by the edge of the sword, famines, pestilences, terrors, days of vengeance, and unheard of horrors. The pages of Josephus, descriptive of the unparalleled woes which culminated in the utter ruin of Jerusalem, furnish an ample commentary on these symbols and on the words of our Lord. Why should we ignore the statements of the Jewish historian, and search in the pages of Gibbon, or in the annals of modern Europe, to find the fulfilment of prophecies which were so signally fulfilled before the end of the Jewish age?

The Martyr-Scene.

The fifth seal is a martyr-scene—the blood of souls crying from under the altar where they had been slain for the Word of God (vi, 9, 10). This corresponds with the Lord's announcement that his followers should be put to death (Matt. xxiv, 9; Luke xxi, 16). The white robes and the comfort given to the martyrs answer to Jesus' pledge that in their patience they should win their souls (Luke xxi, 19), and that "whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall save it" (Mark viii, 35). But these souls wait only for "a little time" (ver. 11), even as Jesus declared that all the martyr-blood shed from the time of Abel should be visited in vengeance upon that generation, even upon Jerusalem the murderess of prophets (Matt. xxiii, 34–38). And then, to show how quickly the retribution comes, like the "immediately after the tribulation" of Matt. xxiv, 29, the sixth seal is opened, and exhibits the terrors of the end (verses 12–17). We need not linger to show how the symbols of this seal correspond with the language of Jesus and other prophets when describing the great and terrible day of the Lord. But we should note that before this judgment falls the elect of God are sealed,

The Sixth Seal.

[1] In chap. xxii, 1, it is called "the throne of God *and of the Lamb*." The throne belonged to the Lamb as well as to God. Comp. chap. iii, 21.

[2] To understand the rider on the white horse as a symbol of Christ, as many do, and the others as symbols of war, famine, etc., involves the interpretation in manifest confusion of imagery. If the first rider denote a person, so should the others; but, according to the analogy of corresponding prophecies, we have here a fourfold symbol of impending judgments. Comp. above, p. 341.

and there appear two companies, the elect of the twelve tribes (the Jewish-Christian Church—the circumcision), and an innumerable company out of all nations and tongues (the Gentile Church—the uncircumcision) who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (chap. vii). This is the apocalyptic counterpart of Jesus' words: "He shall send forth his angels with a great trumpet-sound, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. xxiv, 31).

The opening of the sixth seal brought us to the very verge of doom, and we might naturally suppose that the seventh would usher in the ultimate consummation. But it issues in the vision of the seven trumpets, which traverses a part of the same field again, and awfully portrays the signs, wonders, and horrors indicated by the symbols of the sixth seal. These trumpet woes we understand to be a highly wrought picture of the fearful sights and great signs from heaven of which Jesus spoke, the abomination of desolation, Jerusalem compassed with armies, and "signs in the sun and moon and stars; and upon the land distress of nations in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear and for expectation of the things coming on the world" (Luke xxi, 25, 26).[1] Accordingly, the first four trumpet-woes fall, respectively, on the land, the sea, the rivers and fountains of water, and the lights of heaven, and their imagery is appropriated from the account of the plagues of Egypt, and from other parts of the Old Testament. These plagues do not ruin everything, but, like Ezekiel's symbols (Ezek. v, 2), each destroys a third.

The Seven Trumpets.

The last three trumpets are signals of direr woes (viii, 13). The tormenting locusts from the abyss, introduced by the fifth trumpet, assume the form of a moving army, after the manner of Joel's description (Joel ii, 1–11), and are permitted to torment those men who have not the seal of God upon them. They may appropriately denote the unclean spirits of demons, which were permitted to come forth in those days of vengeance and possess and torment the men who had given themselves over to

The plague from the abyss.

[1] "The descriptions are of a kind," says Bleek, "that cannot be meant literally, since they cannot be shaped into intuitive ideas. But it is also inadmissible to refer them to single political events and catastrophes happening upon the earth, either at the time of the writing, so that the seer must have had them already before his eyes, or occurring later, so that these visions were fulfilled in them. Rather should we view the contents of these visions as a general poetical representation of the great revolutions of nature connected with the appearing of the Lord, or preceding it, in which Old Testament images, taken particularly from the narrative of the Egyptian plagues, lie at the foundation, and particulars should not be especially urged."—Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 228. Lond., 1874.

all wickedness. Describing the excessive impiety of the Jewish leaders, Josephus remarks: "No age ever bred a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was from the beginning of the world." "I suppose that had the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overwhelmed by water, or else been destroyed by such thunder as the country of Sodom perished by; for it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such punishments; for by their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed."[1] Was not some fact like this before the mind of our Lord when he spoke of the unclean spirit that took seven others more wicked than himself, and returned and entered the house from which he had been cast out? "So shall it be," said he, "with this wicked generation" (Matt. xii, 43–45).[2]

The armies of Euphrates.

The sixth trumpet is the signal for unloosing the armies restrained "at the great river Euphrates" (ix, 14). All proper names of this book appear to be symbolical. So we understand Sodom and Egypt (xi, 8), Michael (xii, 7), Zion (xiv, 1), Har-Magedon (xvi,16), Babylon (xvii, 5), and New Jerusalem (xxi, 2). It would be contrary to all these analogies to understand the name Euphrates (in ix, 14, and xvi, 12) in a literal sense. In chap. xvii, 1 the mystic Babylon is represented as sitting upon many waters, and these waters are explained in verse 15 as symbolizing peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.[3] What more natural explanation of this symbol, then, than to understand it of the multitudinous armies, which in their appointed time came with their prowess and terror, compassed the Jewish capital about, and pressed the siege with unrelenting fury to the bitter end? The Roman army was composed of soldiers from many nations, and fitly corresponds with the abomination of desolation spoken of in our Lord's discourse (Matt. xxiv, 15). "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand" (Luke xxi, 20).

At this momentous point in the revelation, and when we might

[1] Whiston's Josephus; Wars, book v, chapters x, 5, and xiii, 6.

[2] The star fallen from heaven, to whom is given the key of the pit of the abyss, can scarcely denote any other than the Satan whom Jesus saw falling like lightning from heaven (Luke x, 18), and the names Abaddon and Apollyon are but symbolic names of Satan, the prince or chief of the demons. It should be noticed also that in chap. xviii, 2 the fallen Babylon is described as having "become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird."

[3] That Euphrates is here to be taken as a symbolical name is ably shown by Fairbairn, Prophecy, etc., pp. 410, 411, and Appendix M.

naturally expect the seventh trumpet to sound, there is a pause, and lo, "another strong angel, coming down from the heaven, arrayed with a cloud, and the rainbow upon his head, and his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire" (x, 1). The attributes of this angel, and their correspondence with the sublime description of the Son of man in chap. i, 13–16, point him out as no other than the Lord himself,[1] and his lion-like cry, and the accompanying voices of the seven thunders, remind us of Paul's prophecy that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with voice of archangel, and with trump of God" (1 Thess. iv, 16). This is no other than "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," which Jesus himself foretold as destined to come to pass in that generation (Matt. xxiv, 30–34). His glorious appearance seems like a prelude to the sound of the last trumpet, but the delay is not to defer the catastrophe, but to furnish an opportunity to say that with the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God is to be finished (verses 6 and 7). The prophet also takes a book from the angel's hand and eats it (8–11) after the manner of Ezekiel (ii, 9–iii, 3), and is told that he shall "prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings." For John survived that terrible catastrophe, and lived long after to make known the testimony of God. It was more than a suggestion that that disciple should tarry till the coming of the Lord (comp. John xxi, 21–24). The measurement of the temple, altar, and worshippers (xi, 1), and the treading under foot of the holy city forty-two months (three years and a half=a time, times, and a half a time), signify that the whole will be given over to desolation. This, again, corresponds with our Lord's words (Luke xxi, 24): "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Judging from the analogy of the language of Daniel, the "times of the

The mighty Angel arrayed with cloud and rainbow.

[1] It is in accord with the habit of repetition common to apocalyptic prophecies that the Son of man should appear in this book under various forms. First the glorious Christophany of chap. i, then as the Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes (v, 6), then as the mighty, rainbow-encircled Angel of this passage (x, 1), then as Michael (xii, 7), and again as a Lamb (xiv, 1), and as the Son of man on a cloud (xiv, 14), then as the rider on the white horse (xix, 11), and finally as the Judge sitting on a great white throne (xx, 11). Thus the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ fittingly reveals him in manifold aspects of his character and glory. So, also, on the other hand, the arch-enemy, or antichrist, appears under various forms of manifestation, as Abaddon, or Apollyon, the angel of the abyss (ix, 11), the great red dragon (xii, 3), the beast out of the sea and out of the land (xiii, 1, 11), the scarlet-coloured beast on which the harlot is sitting (xvii, 3), the beast out of the abyss (xvii, 8; comp. xi, 7), and even the mystic Babylon considered as a habitation of devils (xviii, 2).

Gentiles" (*καιροί*; comp. Luke xxi, 24, with the Septuagint and Theodotion of Dan. vii, 25; xii, 7) are the "time, times, and half a time" during which the destructive siege was to continue, and the city be trodden without and within. During a corresponding period the two witnesses prophecy. These are, perhaps, best understood as a symbolic portraiture of the martyrs who perished by Jewish persecution, here conceived as two witnesses (comp. Deut. xvii, 6; xix, 15; Matt. xviii, 16; 2 Cor. xiii, 1) attested by such signs as proved Moses and Elijah to be true prophets, but perishing in the city where also their Lord was crucified after he had performed miracles "to-day and to-morrow and the third," and declared that it was "not allowable for a prophet to perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke xiii, 33).

With this revelation, which stands as an episode between the sixth and seventh trumpets, we are the more fully prepared to feel the tremendous significance of the last trumpet. In that lingering hour of the sixth trumpet—an awful pause before the final blast—"There was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell." It would not be difficult to cite from the pages of Josephus an almost literal fulfilment of these words.[1] The imagery has allusion to the trumpet signaled fall of Jericho.

The last trumpet.

[1] See Josephus, Wars, book iv, chap. iv, 5, and chap. v. 1. If any one would see the fanciful and arbitrary hermeneutical methods into which some of the continuous-historical interpreters of the Revelation unconsciously involve themselves, let him note the following from Faber: "The great city (mystic Babylon) is said to comprehend ten different parts, or streets, which answer to the ten horns of the first apocalyptic wild beast, and which denote the ten kingdoms of the divided Roman Empire; for, since one tenth part of the great city is thrown down by an earthquake at the close of the second woe, such language necessarily implies a division into ten parts. The same great city is viewed also under two different aspects, according to its wider and its narrower extent. As a literal city may, at one time, comprehend within its walls a much larger tract of land than it does at another time, whence a district which was formerly within it may be subsequently without it; so the allegorical great city is variously spoken of, according as in point of geography it is variously contemplated. On this principle the platform of the ten streets, though it constituted the whole city when viewed in reference to the ecclesiastical authority exercised from its palace or centre, constituted but a part of it when viewed in reference to the wide dominions of the Roman Cæsars; and on the same principle, any province which lies beyond the geographical limits of the ten streets may be truly described as being either within or without the city. In this same manner, accordingly, we find the province of Judea spoken of. Our Lord is said to have been crucified *within* the great city, because he was crucified in the province of Judea, at that time within the limits of the Roman Empire [so was Britain! Surely a remarkable way of telling *where* the Lord was crucified]; yet is that identical province described as being without the great city (Rev. xi, 8; xiv, 20), because it lies without the platform of the ten streets which constitute the proper Western Empire, or Latin Patriarchate."—The Sacred Calendar of Prophecy (3 vols., Lond., 1828), vol. i, pp. 31, 32. Comp. other specimens in Farrar, The Early Days of Christianity, pp. 434, 435.

Next and "quickly" (xi, 14) the last trumpet sounds, and great voices in the heaven say "The kingdom of the world is become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign unto the ages of the ages" (ver. 15). The old æon has passed, the new one has begun, and the heavenly host shout a pæan of triumph. The blood of the souls that cried from under the altar (vi, 10) is now avenged, and those prophets and saints receive their reward (xi, 18). The old temple disappears, and the temple of God which is in heaven opens, and reveals the long-lost ark of the covenant (ver. 19), henceforth accessible to all who are washed in the blood of the Lamb.

The second part of the Apocalypse (chaps. xii–xxii) is not a chronological sequel to the first, but travels over the same ground again. The two parts have a relation to each other somewhat like the dream of the great image and the vision of the four beasts in the Book of Daniel. They cover the same field of vision, but view things under different aspects. The first part exhibits the terrible vengeance of the Lamb upon his enemies, as if contemplating everything from the idea of the king "who sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city" (Matt. xxii, 7). The second part presents a vivid outline of the struggling Church passing her first crisis, and rising through persecution and danger to triumph and glory. The same great struggles and the same fearful catastrophe appear in each part, though under different symbols.

The second part of the Apocalypse a repetition of the first under other symbols.

By the woman, in chap. xii, 1, we understand the apostolic Church; the man-child (ver. 5) represents her children, the adherents and faithful devotees of the Gospel. The imagery is taken from Isa. lxvi, 7, 8. These are the children of "the Jerusalem which is above," and which Paul calls "our mother" (Gal. iv, 26). The statement that this child was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and be caught up to the throne of God, has led many to suppose that Christ is designated. But the language of the promise to the church of Thyatira (chap. ii, 26, 27), and the vision of the martyrs who live and reign with Christ a thousand years (chap. xx, 4–6), show that Christ's faithful martyrs, whose blood was the seed of the Church, are associated with him in the authority and administration of his Messianic rule. The dragon is the old serpent, the devil, and his standing ready to devour the child as soon as born is an image appropriated from Pharaoh's attitude toward the infant Israelites (Exod. i, 16). Michael and his angels are but symbolic names of Christ and his apostles. The war in heaven was fought in the same element where the woman appeared, and the casting out of demons by Christ and his apostles

The Woman and the Dragon.

was the reality to which these symbols point (comp. Luke x, 18; John xii, 31). The soul-conflicts of the Christian are of like character.[1] The flight of the woman into the wilderness was the scattering of the Church by reason of bitter persecutions (comp. Acts viii, 1), but especially that flight of the church in Judea which Jesus authorized when his disciples should see the signs of the end (Matt. xxiv, 16; Luke xxi, 21).

The Beasts from the sea and from the land.

Being cast down from the heavenly places, the dragon stood upon the sand of the sea, and next revealed himself in a wild beast, which is seen coming up out of the sea (xiii, 1). He combines various features of a leopard, a bear, and a lion, the first three beasts of Daniel's vision (Dan. vii, 4, 6), and the power which the dragon gives him imparts to him all the malignity, blasphemy, and persecuting violence which characterized Daniel's fourth beast at the appearance of the little horn. This beast we understand to be the Roman Empire, especially as represented in Nero, under whom the Jewish war began, and by whom the woman's seed, the saints (comp. xii, 17, and xiii, 7), were most bitterly persecuted. He was the veriest incarnation of wickedness, a signal revelation of antichrist, and corresponds in every essential feature with the man of sin, the son of perdition, of whom Paul wrote to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. ii, 3–10).[2] At the same time another beast is seen coming up out of the land (xiii, 11), having two horns like a lamb. But he is only the satellite, the *alter ego* and representative of the first beast, and exercises his authority. This second beast is a proper symbol of the Roman government of Judea by procurators, and if we seek for the meaning of the two horns, we may find it in the two procurators specially noted for their tyranny and oppression, Albinus and Gessius Florus.[3] It is a well-known fact that the Christians of this period were required to worship the image of the emperor or die, and the procurators were the emperor's agents to enforce this measure.[4] Thus the second beast

[1] Paul fully recognized the spiritual and demoniacal character of the Christian's struggle when he wrote: "Our wrestling is not against blood and flesh, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. vi, 12). Such conflict was a war in heaven.

[2] Comp. Farrar, Early Days of Christianity, chap. xxviii, section v.

[3] See Josephus, Ant., book xx, chap. ix, 1, and chap. xi, 1. Wars, book ii, chaps. xiv. and xv.

[4] Alford, after quoting in evidence from Pliny's letter to Trajan, observes: "If it be said, as an objection to this, that it is not an image of the emperor, but of the beast itself, which is spoken of, the answer is very simple, that as the seer himself in chap. xvii, 11 does not hesitate to identify one of the *seven kings* with the beast itself, so

is appropriately called "the false prophet" (chaps. xvi, 13; xix, 20), for his great work was to turn men to a blasphemous idolatry. The mystic number of the beast (xiii, 18) would then be represented both by the Greek Λατεινος, and the Hebrew נרון קסר, the numerical value of each being 666. For the beast was both the *Latin* kingdom, and its representative and head, *Nero Cæsar*.

Vision of Mount Zion.

The vision of Mount Zion in chap. xiv is a glorious contrast to the preceding revelations of antichrist. It presents the heavenly side of this period of persecution and trial, and sets it forth in seven exhibitions: (1) First is seen the Lamb on Mount Zion (the heavenly Zion), and with him are the thousands of his redeemed Israel in great glory (verses 1–5). These are no other than the woman's seed who have been caught up to the throne of God (xii, 5), but are now seen from another point of view. (2) Next follows the vision of the flying angel bearing eternal good tidings to every nation (verses 6, 7). This is done in spite of the dragon and his agents. While the dragon, wielding the forces of empire, seeks to annihilate the Church of God, the true children of the heavenly Jerusalem are caught up to be with Christ in glory; but the Gospel is still preached in all the world, accompanied by warning and promise. Thus the saints triumph "on account of the blood of the Lamb, and on account of the word of their testimony" (chap. xii, 11). (3) Then an angel, as by anticipation, announces the fall of Babylon the great (ver. 8), and is followed (4) by another who warns men against the worship of the beast and his image (verses 9–12). (5) Then a voice from heaven pronounces them blessed who die in the Lord *from henceforth* (ver. 13); as if from that eventful epoch the dead in Christ should enter at once into a rest

we may fairly assume that the image of the beast for the time being would be the image of the reigning emperor."—Greek Test. on Rev. xiii, 15. It is strange that learned critics will turn, with an air of contempt, away from an explanation of the "image of the beast" so natural and simple as that given above, and find satisfaction in such fancies as that this image denotes the images of saints set up in papal churches (Faber); or the pope considered as the idol of the Roman Church (Newton, Daubuz); or the temporal power of the pope, and the patrimony granted by Pepin in A. D. 754 (Glasgow); or the papal kingdom or hierarchy which the priesthood established (Lord); or the empire of Charlemagne, regarded as the image of the old heathen Roman Empire (Mede); or the pope's decretals (Osiander); or the Inquisition (Vitringa); or the papal General Councils of Western Europe (Elliott). Writers so full of visions of modern Europe and the fortunes of the papacy that they quickly discern apocalyptic epochs in such events as the battle of Sadowa, July 3, 1866, the pope's bull of July, 1868, the insurrection in Spain under Prim, and the revolution in France consequent upon the battle of Sedan, 1870, can scarcely be expected to view any prophecy from the historical standpoint of the sacred writer. Comp. Elliott, Horæ Apocalypticæ, 5th ed., Lond., 1872; Preface and Postscript.

which the dead of the previous æon could not know. (6) The sixth scene is that of the Son of man represented as wearing a golden crown, holding a sharp sickle in his hand, and attended by an angel (verses 14–16); and with these soon appears another angel having a sharp sickle, and the land was reaped, and the winepress, trodden without the city, spread rivers of blood that seemed to deluge all the land. This is but another picture of the same great catastrophe, seen from another point of view.

The seven last Plagues.

The vision of the seven vials (*φιάλας*, *bowls*) full of the wrath of God, which are also called the seven last plagues (chapters xv, xvi), is but another symbolization of the seven trumpet-woes (of chapters viii–xi), with which they minutely correspond. The duplicate vision of these terrible judgments (one judgment of sevenfold fury, comp. Dan. iii, 19) is analogous to other repetitions of the same subject under different imagery (see above, pp. 317–319, and 324, 325). This double vision of wrath, like the double dream of Pharaoh, served to show that these things were established by the Almighty, and that he would shortly bring them to pass (Gen. xli, 32).[1]

Vision of the mystic Babylon.

The vision of Babylon the great (chapters xvii, xviii) is a highly wrought apocalyptic picture of the apostate Church of the old covenant (comp. above, p. 299). The then existing Jerusalem, in bondage with her children (Gal. iv, 25), is portrayed as a harlot, and the language and imagery are appropriated largely from Ezekiel's allegory of the same city (Ezek. xvi; comp. Ezek. xxiv).[2] It is that murderess of prophets against whom Jesus uttered the terrible words of Matt. xxiii, 34–36. From the beginning of the Roman Empire Jerusalem sought and maintained a heathenish complicity with the Cæsars, and the empire became, politically, her dependence and support. There was constant strife among ambitious rulers to obtain the so-called "kingdom of Judea." Jerusalem was the chief city of that province, and is, therefore, properly said to "reign over the kings (not of the *earth*, and not over *emperors* and *monarchs* of the *world*, but) of the land" (chap.

[1] "The repetition of the vision of judgment in various forms," says Farrar, "is one of the recognized Hebrew methods of expressing their certainty. The same general calamities are indicated by diverse symbols." He cites from the ancient Commentary of Victorinus the statement that the seven vials are but another symbol of the same judgments as those denoted by the trumpets, and adds: "There is fair reason to suppose that Victorinus derived this valuable and by no means obvious principle of interpretation from early, and perhaps from apostolic, tradition."—The Early Days of Christianity, chap. xxviii, p. 450. London, 1882.

[2] Comp. Isa. i, 21: "How has the once faithful city become a harlot!" Comp. also Jer. ii, 2, 20; iii, 3–6; iv, 30; xiii, 27.

xvii, 18). It is the same land (γῆ), the tribes of which mourn over the coming of the Son of man (chap. i, 7).[1] We, accordingly, take the mystic Babylon to be identical with the great city which, in chap. xi, 8, is called Sodom and Egypt, where the Lord was crucified.[2]

Mystery of woman and beast.

The explanation of the mystery of the woman and the beast, given in chap. xvii, 7–18, has puzzled all interpreters. It is noticeably a composite explanation, and avowedly applies partly to the woman and partly to the beast which carries her. The mystery requires for its solution "the mind which hath wisdom" (ver. 9), and it may have had a meaning and force for John's contemporaries which we of a long subsequent age cannot so easily feel. "The beast which was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go away into destruction" (ver. 8), is an expression of cautious reserve, which is notably like Paul's guarded language about the man of sin (2 Thess. ii, 5–7). The beast with seven heads and ten horns is usually identified with the wild beast from the sea (chap. xiii, 1), and may be understood of Rome and her allied and tributary princes who took part in the war against Judea and Jerusalem. The great harlot city, whose

[1] "The kings of the land," who, in Psa. ii, 2, set themselves against Jehovah and his Christ, are declared by the Apostle Peter to be such kings as Herod and Pontius Pilate (Acts iv, 27). These, he declares, "were gathered together with Gentiles and peoples of Israel." Josephus says: "The city of Jerusalem is situated in the very middle (of the land), on which account some have called that city the navel of the country. Nor indeed is Judea destitute of such delights as come by the sea, since its maritime places extend as far as Ptolemais. It was parted into eleven portions, of which the royal city Jerusalem was supreme, and presided over all the neighbouring country as the head does over the body."—Wars of the Jews, book iii, iii, 5.

[2] It deserves notice that there is a title which, in the Apocalypse, is applied to one particular city *par excellence*. It is the title "that great city" [ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη]. It is clear that it is always the same city which is so designated, unless another be expressly specified. Now, the city in which the witnesses are slain is expressly called by this title, "that great city;" and the names Sodom and Egypt are applied to it; and it is furthermore particularly identified as the city "where also our Lord was crucified" (chap. xi, 8). There can be no reasonable doubt that this refers to ancient Jerusalem. If, then, "the great city" of chap. xi, 8, means ancient Jerusalem, it follows that "the great city" of chap. xiv, 8, styled also Babylon, and "the great city" of chap. xvi, 19, must equally signify Jerusalem. By parity of reasoning, "that great city" [ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη] in chap. xvii, 18, and elsewhere, must refer also to Jerusalem. It is a mere assumption to say, as Dean Alford does, that Jerusalem is never called by this name. There is no unfitness, but the contrary, in such a distinctive title being applied to Jerusalem. It was to an Israelite the royal city, by far the greatest in the land, the only city which could properly be so designated; and it ought never to be forgotten that the visions of the Apocalypse are to be regarded from a Jewish point of view.—The Parousia, pp. 486, 487.

holy temple had been made a place of merchandise and a den of thieves (Matt. xxi, 13; John ii, 15), was carried for a hundred years by Rome, and at last hated and destroyed by the very kings with whom she had maintained her heathenish traffic. Jerusalem's relation to Rome and her tributary princes was well voiced in that Jewish appeal to Pilate: "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend. . . . We have no king but Cæsar" (John xix, 12, 15).

The beast from the abyss.

But while the relations of Jerusalem and Rome are thus outlined, the beast "which was, and is not, and shall come" (*πάρεσται*, *shall be present*, ver. 8), may symbolize a deeper mystery. He is not a combination of the lion, the leopard, and the bear, nor does he "come up out of the sea" like the beast of chap. xiii, 1, but he is a "scarlet-coloured beast," and "comes up out of the abyss." May he not, therefore, be more properly regarded as a special manifestation of the "great red dragon" of chap. xii, 3? The seven heads and ten horns of the dragon indicate seats of power and regal and princely agents through whom the kingly "angel of the abyss" (chap. ix, 11) accomplishes his satanic purposes. We need not, therefore, look to the seven hills of Rome,[1] or to ten particular kings, for the solution of the mystery of the scarlet-coloured beast. The language of the angel interpreter, even when ostensibly explaining the mystery, is manifestly enigmatical. Just as when, in chap. xiii, 18, he that has understanding is called upon to "count the number of the beast," so here the clue to the mystery of the seven heads and ten horns is itself a riddle. "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is sitting" (ver. 9). This may indeed refer literally to seven mountains, either of Jerusalem or Rome, for both these cities covered seven heights; but it is as likely to refer, enigmatically, to manifold political supports or alliances, considered as so many seats of power or consolidated kingdoms, and called seven because of covenanted arrangements.[2] The words which follow

[1] The seven mountains on which the woman sitteth (ver. 9) may be the mountains of Jerusalem as well as the seven hills of Rome. There were Zion, Moriah, Acra, and Bezetha, and the three fortified heights, Millo, Ophel, and the rock, seventy-five feet high, on which the Castle of Antonia was built. See Edersheim, The Temple, pp. 11, 13. Boston, 1881 The notion that the *septem colles* of Latin writers were familiar to John and his Greek and Hebrew readers, and, necessarily to be understood here, is as fanciful as that the eagles of Matt. xxiv, 28, are the Roman eagles. The number seven, in this allusion to the mountains, need not be pressed into fuller significance than the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb in chap. v, 6, where no one insists on a literal significance of the number seven.

[2] "The mountains," says Glasgow, "are, like other terms, to be understood

should be rendered: "And seven kings there are," not necessarily, as commonly translated, "*they* are seven kings," that is, the mountains represent seven kings. We are not satisfied with any solution of the riddle of these seven kings which we have yet seen, and will not presume to add another to the legion of guesses which have been put forth.[1] But we venture to suggest that the beast "which was, and is not, and shall come," may be understood primarily of Satan himself, under his different and successive manifestations, in the persons of bitter persecutors of the Church. It was the beast from the abyss by whom the two witnesses were slain (chap. xi, 7; comp. chap. xx, 7). Cast out by the death of one imperial persecutor he goes into the abyss (comp. Luke viii, 31), and, anon, comes up again out of the abyss, and appropriates the blasphemy and forces and diadems of the empire to make war upon the Lamb and his faithful followers. As the Elijah, who was to come before the great and notable day of Jehovah (Mal. iv, 5), appeared in the person of John the Baptist (Matt. xi, 14), and was so called because he represented the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke i, 17), so the beast "which was, and is not, is himself also an eighth,[2] and

symbolically. If the woman is not literal, why should the mountains be so thought? And to call the woman a literal city, built on seven hills, is equally gratuitous, whether a Protestant says it of Rome or a Romanist of Constantinople."—The Apocalypse Translated and Expounded, p. 439.

[1] The explanations of the seven kings may be divided into three classes: I. Those which regard them as so many different historical phases of world-power, as (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Rome, (7) Germanic-Sclavonic Empire (Auberlen); or (1) Babylonian, (2) Medo-Persian, (3) Greek, (4) Syrian, (5) Egyptian, (6) Roman, (7) German Empire (Wordsworth). II. Those which make them represent so many different classes of rulers, as (1) kings, (2) consuls, (3) decemvirs, (4) military tribunes, (5) dictators, (6) emperors, (7) popes (Vitringa); or (1) kings, (2) consuls, (3) dictators, (4) decemvirs, (5) military tribunes, (6) the wreath-crowned (στέφανος) emperors, (7) the diadem (διάδημα) emperors (Elliott). III. Those which understand seven individual kings, as the first seven Cæsars, (1) Julius, (2) Augustus, (3) Tiberius, (4) Caligula, (5) Claudius, (6) Nero, (7) Galba (Stuart). Others begin the seven with Augustus; Grotius begins with Claudius; Düsterdieck throws out of the number the three usurpers, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and makes the seventh head Vespasian. Züllig understands the seven kings to be (1) Herod the Great, (2) Archelaus, (3) Philip, (4) Antipas, (5) Agrippa, (6) Herod of Chalcis, (7) Agrippa II., considered as antitypes of the seven Edomite kings mentioned in Gen. xxxvi, 33–38. The author of The Parousia (Lond., 1878) identifies them with the seven procurators of Judea, (1) Cuspius Fadus, (2) Tiberius Alexander, (3) Ventidius Cumanus, (4) Antonius Felix, (5) Porcius Festus, (6) Albinus, (7) Gessius Florus. The above by no means exhausts the various explanations. Surely he who would presume to determine an important question of apocalyptic interpretation upon any theory of the seven kings builds upon a very uncertain foundation.

[2] According to Gebhardt "the eighth king is identical with the beast (comp. Cowles on the Revelation, in loco), whose seven heads are seven kings. As individual

is of the seven [of the same spirit and power], and goes away into destruction" (ver. 11). It is not at all impossible that the widespread rumour that Nero was to appear again grew out of a misapprehension of this riddle, just as some modern interpreters still insist (see Alford on Matt. xi, 14) that the real Elijah is yet literally to come. The early Chiliasts, like their modern followers, often insisted on the literal interpretation even of riddles.

Fall of the mystic Babylon.

The fall of Babylon the great is portrayed in glowing colours in chap. xviii, 1–xix, 10, and the language and imagery are appropriated almost wholly from the Old Testament prophetic pictures of the fall of ancient Babylon and Tyre.[1] The vision is fourfold: First (1) an angel proclaims the

forms of world-power appear to the seer to culminate and unite in an empire which he calls *the beast*, so he sees again the particular stages of the development of this empire, the individual rulers of the same culminate in one prince, which he also describes as *the beast*. As the leopard, the bear, and the lion are contained in the beast, so are the seven heads of the beast contained in the one head. We may say that as he sees in an individual king the nature of a definite empire, uniting in itself all earlier empires, personified, so also he sees unfolded in this empire the nature of that individual king: this king is to him the empire in person; this empire is to him the king in the form of a kingdom. It is also evidently much easier in the one place to think of an individual king, and in the other of an empire, and it is therefore ever to be maintained that the seer so thought; the empire of which this is the king, the king whose is the empire."—The Doctrine of the Apocalypse, English translation, p. 221. Edinb., 1878.

[1] How notably strange it is that learned exegetes, who can see striking fulfilments of this prophecy in comparatively unimportant events of the politics and feuds of modern Europe and the papacy, are forgetful of such events as the following, which is only one of many similar pictures of woe given us by the Jewish historian. Describing the destruction of the temple, Josephus says: "While the holy house was on fire everything was plundered that came to hand, and ten thousand of those that were caught were slain; nor was there a commiseration of any age, or any reverence of gravity; but children and old men, and profane persons and priests, were all slain in the same manner; so that this war went round all sorts of men, and brought them to destruction, and as well those that made supplication for their lives as those that defended themselves by fighting. The flame was also carried a long way, and made an echo together with the groans of those that were slain; and because this hill was high, and the works at the temple were very great, one would have thought the whole city had been on fire. Nor can one imagine anything either greater or more terrible than this noise; for there was at once a shout of the Roman legions, who were marching all together, and a sad clamour of the seditious, who were now surrounded with fire and sword. The people also that were left above were beaten back upon the enemy, and under a great consternation, and made sad moans at the calamity they were under; the multitude also that was in the city joined in this outcry with those that were upon the hill; and, besides, many of those that were worn away by the famine, and their mouths almost closed, when they saw the fire of the holy house, they exerted their utmost strength, and brake out into groans and outcries again: Perea did also return the echo, as well as the mountains round about [the city], and

awful ruin (xviii, 1–3). He repeats the words already used in chap. xiv, 8, but which were used of old by Isaiah (xxi, 9) and Jeremiah (li, 8) in foretelling the ruin of the Chaldæan capital. (2) Then another heavenly voice is heard, like the words of Jesus in Matt. xxiv, 16, and like the prophetic word which long before had called the chosen people to "flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul" (Jer. li, 6; comp. l, 8; Isa. xlviii, 20; Zech. ii, 6, 7), and this call is followed by a woeful dirge over the sudden ruin of the great city (xviii, 4–20). This oracle of doom should be closely compared with that of Isaiah and Jeremiah over ancient Babylon (Isa. xiii, 19–22; Jer. l, li), and that of Ezekiel over the fall of Tyre (Ezek. xxvi–xxviii). (3) The violence of the catastrophe is next illustrated by the symbol of a mighty angel hurling a millstone into the sea, and the consequent cessation of all her former activity and noise (xviii, 21–24). (4) After these things there is heard a pæan of victory in the heavens—notable contrast to the voice of the harpers and minstrels of the fallen Babylon, and all the servants of God are admonished to prepare for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

After the fall of the great Babylon there follows a sevenfold vision of the coming and kingdom of the Christ (chap. xix, 11–xxi, 8). As, in Matt. xxiv, 29, "immediately after the tribulation of those days" the sign of the Son of man appears in heaven, so, immediately after the horrors of the woe-smitten city, the seer of Patmos beholds the heaven opened, and the glorious King of kings and Lord of lords comes forth to judge the nations and avenge his own elect. This great apocalyptic picture contains: (1) The parousia of the Son of man in his glory (xix, 11–16). (2) The destruction of the beast and the false prophet with all their impious forces (verses 17–21). This overthrow is portrayed in noticeable harmony with that of the lawless one in 2 Thess. ii, 8, "whom the Lord Jesus shall take off with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught with the manifestation of his coming;" and the beastly agents of Satan, like those of Daniel's visions (Dan. vii, 11), are given to the burning flame. (3) The destruction of these beasts, to whom the dragon gave his power and

The Parousia and Kingdom of the Son of man.

augmented the force of the entire noise. Yet was the misery itself more terrible than this disorder; for one would have thought that the hill itself, on which the temple stood, was seething hot, as full of fire on every part of it, that the blood was larger in quantity than the fire, and those that were slain more in number than those that slew them; for the ground did nowhere appear visible for the dead bodies that lay on it; but the soldiers went over heaps of these bodies as they ran upon such as fled from them."—Wars of the Jews, book vi, chap. v, 1.

authority (chap. xiii, 2, 11, 12), is appropriately followed by the binding and imprisonment of the old dragon himself (chap. xx, 1–3). The symbols employed to set forth all these triumphs are surely not to be understood literally of a warfare carried on with carnal weapons (comp. 2 Cor. x, 4; Eph. vi, 11–17), but they vividly express momentous facts forever to be associated with the consummation of that age, and crisis of ages, when Judaism fell, and Christianity opened upon the world. From that period onward no well-authenticated instance of demoniacal possession can be shown.[1]

The Millennium.

With that shutting up of Satan the millennium begins, a long indefinite period, as the symbolical number most naturally suggests (see above, p. 298), but a period of ample fulness for the universal diffusion and triumph of the Gospel (verses 4–6). "The first resurrection" takes place at the beginning of this period, and is chiefly conspicuous as a resurrection of martyrs; a bliss of which not all the dead appear to have been "accounted worthy" (*καταξιωθέντες*, Luke xx, 35), but which Paul was anxious to attain (Phil. iii, 11). For it is written, "Blessed and holy is he who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority," for of such Jesus said, "neither can they die any more" (Luke xx, 36). Moreover, they sit upon thrones, and judgment is given to them (comp. Dan. vii, 22; Matt. xix, 28; Luke xxii, 28–30; 1 Cor. vi, 2), and they are made "priests of God and of Christ, and reign with him the thousand years." The language of verse 4, however, intimates that others besides the martyrs may sit upon thrones and exercise judgment with the Christ (comp. chap. ii, 26, 27; iii, 21).

The Chiliastic interpretation.

Of other things which may occur during the millennium no mention is here made, and yet all manner of fancies have been built upon this brief passage of the Apocalypse. The Chiliasts assume that this millennium is to be a visible reign of Christ and his saints upon the earth, and with this reign they associate a most literal conception of other prophecies. The following, from Justin Martyr, is one of the earliest expressions of this view: "I, and others," he says, "who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be a resurrection of the

[1] "We conclude," says the author of The Parousia, "that at the end of the age a marked and decisive check was given to the power of Satan; which check is symbolically represented in the Apocalypse by the chaining and imprisoning of the dragon in the abyss. It does not follow from this that error and evil were banished from the earth. It is enough to show that this was, as Schlegel says, 'the decisive crisis between ancient and modern times,' and that the introduction of Christianity 'has changed and regenerated, not only government and science, but the whole system of human life.'"—Parousia, p. 518.

dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare. . . . And, further, there was a certain man with us whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied, by a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem; and that thereafter the general and, in short, the eternal resurrection and judgment of all men would likewise take place."[1] This Ebionite conception, having gained an early prominence, has infected apocalyptic interpretation with a disturbing leaven even until now, and there is little hope of a better exegesis until all dogmatic notions are set aside and we fearlessly accept what the Scripture says, and no more.

Chiliastic interpretation without sufficient warrant.

The old Chiliastic ideas of a restoration of all Israel at Jerusalem, and of Christ and his glorified saints literally sitting on thrones and reigning in visible material glory on the earth, are without warrant in this Scripture. Nothing is here said about Jerusalem, or the Jews, or the Gentiles. An indefinite number sit upon thrones and receive judgment. Among them those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus have a most conspicuous place, and thus they receive the reward promised in chap. vi, 9–11. These now live and reign with Christ, not on the earth, but where the throne of his kingdom is, namely, in the heavens. This accords with Paul's words in 2 Tim. ii, 11: "If we died with him (i. e., by martyrdom; comp. Phil. iii, 10) we shall also live with him; if we endure suffering we shall also reign with him." A resurrection of martyrs, to take place at the beginning of the millennial era appears to be the most natural and obvious import of Rev. xx, 4–6, and nothing is gained by reading into the language another meaning. "I do not see," says Stuart, "how we can, on the ground of exegesis, fairly avoid the conclusion that John has taught in the passage before us that there will be a resurrection of the martyr-saints at the commencement of the period after Satan shall have been shut up in the dungeon of the great abyss."[2]

[1] Dialogue with Trypho, lxxx, lxxxi. "The Book of Revelation," says Hagenbach, "in its twentieth chapter, gave currency to the idea of a millennial kingdom, together with that of a second resurrection; and the imagination of those who dwelt fondly upon sensuous impressions delineated these millennial hopes in the most glowing terms. This was the case, not only with the Judaizing Ebionites and Cerinthus, but also with several orthodox fathers, such as Papias, Justin, Irenæus, and Tertullian."—History of Doctrines, Translated by Smith, vol. i, p. 213. New York, 1861.

[2] Commentary on the Apocalypse, vol. ii, p. 476. Similarly Alford: "No legitimate treatment of this text will extort from it what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If, in a passage where two resurrections are mentioned, where

The last defeat of Satan, and the last judgment.

(5) At the end of the millennial period there is to be a loosing of Satan, a rising of hostile forces, symbolized by Gog and Magog (comp. Ezek. xxxviii, xxxix), and a fearful catastrophe, resulting in the final and everlasting overthrow of the devil—the culmination of the prophecy of Gen. iii, 15. This last conflict, belonging to a distant future, is rapidly passed over by the seer, and its details are not made known (verses 7–10). (6) The last great judgment is next portrayed (verses 11–15), and may well be regarded as the culmination and completion of that continual judgment (depicted in Matt. xxv, 31–46) which began with the parousia and continues until the Son of man delivers over the kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. xv, 24). (7) The last picture in this wonderful apocalyptical series is that of the new heavens and new land, and the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem (xxi, 1–8). It corresponds with Matt. xxv, 34, where the king says to those on his right hand: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." As there the glory of the righteous is put in striking contrast with the curse and doom of the wicked, and, it is finally said, "These shall go away into eternal punishment" (Matt. xxv, 46), so here, after the glory of the redeemed is outlined, it is added, as the issue of an eternal judgment: "But as for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (comp. 'the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,' Matt. xxv, 41), which is the second death."

It should be noticed how this last sevenfold apocalyptic vision

certain *souls lived* at the first, and *the rest of the dead lived* only at the end of a specified period after the first—if in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean *spiritual* rising with Christ, while the second means *literal* rising from the grave; then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to any thing."—Greek Testament, in loco. This argument holds equally good against all theories of the "first resurrection," which allow that the first is figurative and the other literal. Brown's nine famous arguments against the literal, and in favour of a figurative explanation of the first resurrection (Christ's Second Coming, pp. 231–258, New York, 1866), are all aimed against the sensuous Chiliastic notion that it is the simultaneous resurrection of *all* the righteous dead—a view which we repudiate as unscriptural. But Brown himself fairly overthrows the notion of Scott and others that John saw a resurrection of *souls*, and not of *bodies*. "This is to mistake what the apostle saw in the vision. He did not see a *resurrection of souls*. He saw 'the souls of them that were slain;' that is, he had a vision of the martyrs themselves in the state of the dead—after they were dead, and just before their resurrection. Then he saw them rise: 'They lived'—not their souls, but *themselves*. All figurative resurrections in Scripture are couched in the language of literal ones; and why should this be any exception?"—Christ's Second Coming, p. 229.

(chap. xix, 11–xxi, 8) covers the entire field of biblical eschatology. The whole is rapidly sketched, for details would have transcended the purpose of "the prophecy of this book" (xxii, 10), which was to make known things which were shortly to come to pass (chap. i, 1–3). But like the last section of our Lord's discourse (Matt. xxv, 31–46), which introduces things running far beyond the time-limits of that prophecy, but which were to commence "when the Son of man should come in his glory;" so this sevenfold vision begins with the parousia (chap. xix, 11), and sketches in brief outline the mighty triumphs and eternal issues of the Messiah's reign.[1]

These visions introduce what transcends the time-limits of the book.

We understand that the millennium of Rev. xx, 1–6, is now in progress. It dates from the consummation of the Jewish age. It is a round definite number used symbolically for an indefinite æon. It is the period of the Messianic reign, and the kingdom of the heavens, like the mustard seed and the leaven (Matt. xiii, 31–33), is passing through its gradual development. It may require a million years. The impatient Chiliast will not be satisfied with this slow Messianic order, and refuses to see that the powers of darkness have been repressed, and the progress of human civilization has been more marked since the end of that age than ever before. But others see and know that since the dawn of Christianity, idolatry has been well nigh abolished, and every element of righteousness and truth has been gaining prominence and control in the laws of nations.[2] It is not in accord

The Millennium is the Gospel dispensation.

[1] Lange suggestively but somewhat fancifully observes: "The entire æon is to be conceived of as an æon of separations and eliminations in an ethical and a cosmical sense, separations and eliminations such as are necessary to make manifest and to complete the ideal regulations of life. Of judgments of damnation between the judgment upon Antichrist and the judgment upon Satan there can be no question; the reference can be only to a critical government and management preparatory to the final consummation. The whole æon is a crisis which occasions the visible appearance of the heaven on earth. The whole æon is the great last day. We may even conceive of the mutiny which finally breaks out as a result of these preparations, for a sort of protest on the part of the wicked was hinted at by Christ in his eschatological discourse (Matt. xxv, 44), and the most essential element in the curse of hell is the continuance of revolt, the gnashing of teeth."—Commentary on the Revelation of John, p. 350. American edition. New York, 1874.

[2] Pope represents the Catholic faith and interpretation as "content to understand figuratively the glowing representations of the ancient prophecies as applying to the present Christian Church. It takes the Apocalypse as a book of symbols, which does not give consecutive history, but continually reverts to the beginning, and exhibits in varying visions the same one great final truth. Satan was bound or *cast out* when our Saviour ascended; he has never since been the god and seducer of the nations as he was before, and as he will for a season be permitted to be again. The saints,

with either history or prophecy to believe that the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ will have for its historical period an æon shorter than that required for its preparation in the typical dispensations which preceded it. It is not probable that God would take four thousand years of type and shadow to prepare the world for two thousand years of light. We should not expect the earlier part of the Messianic millennium to be without any darkness, and there is nothing in the Scriptures to warrant the idea that its entire period is to be one of uniform and unclouded blessedness and glory.

The vision of the New Jerusalem.

There remains for our notice but one more great apocalyptic picture, the vision of the New Jerusalem. As in chap. xvi, 19, under the seventh and last plague, the fall of the great Babylon (old Jerusalem) was briefly outlined, and then, in chap. xvii–xix, 10, another and more detailed portraiture of that "mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the land" was added, going over many of the same things again, so here, having given under the last series of visions a short but vivid picture of the heavenly Jerusalem (xxi, 1–8), the apocalyptist, following his artistic style and habit of repetition, tells how one of the same seven angels (comp. xvii, 1–4, and xxi, 9–11) took him to a lofty mountain, and gave him a fuller vision of the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. This wife of the Lamb is no other than the woman of chap. xii, 1, but she is here revealed at a later stage of her history, after the dragon has been shut up in the abyss. After the land has been cleared of dragon, beast, and false prophet, the seed of the woman who fled into the wilderness, the seed caught up to the throne of God, are conceived as "coming down out of heaven from God," and all things are made new. The language and symbols used are appropriated mainly from Isaiah lxv, 17–lvi, 24, and the closing chapters of Ezekiel. The great thought is: Babylon, the bloody harlot, has fallen, and New Jerusalem, the glorious Bride, appears.

Meaning of the New Jerusalem.

As the closing chapters of Ezekiel have been variously understood (see above, pp. 344, 345), so this vision of the New Jerusalem, which is evidently modelled after the pattern of that older Apocalypse, has been explained in different

martyrs, and others—the martyrs pre-eminently—now rule with Christ: *and hath made us a kingdom* (Rev. i, 6), they themselves sing; *and they reign upon earth* (Rev. v, 10). The apostles, and all saints, have part in the first resurrection, and in the present regeneration reign with Jesus, though the future regeneration shall be yet more abundant. The unanimous strain of prophecy concerning the glory of the Messiah's kingdom is to be interpreted as partly fulfilled in the spiritual reign of Christ in this world, which is not yet fully manifested as it will be; and partly as the earthly figure of a heavenly reality hereafter."—Compendium of Christian Theology, vol. iii, pp. 400, 401. N. Y., 1881.

ways. (1) According to one class of interpreters, the future restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem on a magnificent scale, are here predicted.[1] (2) According to others, the new heaven, new land, and new Jerusalem are but a symbolic recapitulation of the visions of chap. xx, for the purpose of fuller detail, and are to be understood as synchronizing with the period of the thousand years. (3) But most interpreters regard the prophecy as post-millennial, and descriptive of the final heavenly state of the glorified saints of God. Rejecting the first of the above named views (which represents the sensuous Ebionite conception of the kingdom of heaven, and magnifies the letter to the quenching of the spirit of Scripture), we may blend the two other interpretations. Ezekiel's vision, as we have seen (p. 345), symbolized the New Testament Church and kingdom of God; why should not the same conception enter into this parallel prophecy? But as later revelations are wont to embody fuller and more perfect outlines of the provisions of grace, so John's picture of new heaven, new land, and new city is more luminous and far reaching in its indications of what God has prepared for those who love him and keep his commandments.

The words of Haggai ii, 6, 7, are acknowledged by the best interpreters to be a Messianic prophecy: "Yet once—it is a little while—and I will shake the heavens, and the land, and the sea, and the desert; and I will shake all the nations, and they shall come to the delight[2] of all the nations, and I will

Hag. ii, 6, 7, and Heb. xii, 26-28.

[1] Here properly belongs that exposition of the "new heaven and new earth," which finds in Isa. li, 16; lxv, 17; lxvi, 22; 2 Pet. iii, 10–13; Rev. xx, 11; xxi, 1, a literal prophecy of the destruction of the world by fire, and the creation of a new world in its place. The only question among these interpreters is whether an absolutely new creation is intended, or only a renovation (*παλιγγενεσία*, *regeneration* (Matt. xix, 28) of the materials of the old. That these texts may intimate or dimly foreshadow some such ultimate reconstruction of the physical creation, need not be denied, for we know not the possibilities of the future, nor the purposes of God respecting all things which he has created. But the contexts of these several passages do not authorize such a doctrine. Isa. li, 16, refers to the resuscitation of Zion and Jerusalem, and is clearly metaphorical. The same is true of Isa. lxv, 17, and lxvi, 22, for the context in all these places confines the reference to Jerusalem and the people of God, and sets forth the same great prophetic conception of the Messianic future as the closing chapters of Ezekiel. The language of 2 Pet. iii, 10, 12, is taken mainly from Isa. xxx, 4, and is limited to the parousia, like the language of Matt. xxiv, 29. Then the Lord made "not only the land but also the heaven" to tremble (Heb. xii, 26), and removed the things that were shaken in order to establish a kingdom which cannot be moved (Heb. xii, 27, 28).

[2] This most simple construction of the Hebrew has been strangely ignored by a supposed necessity of making חֶמְדַּת, *delight*, or *desire*, the subject of the verb בָּאוּ,

fill this house with glory." This prophecy is quoted and explained, in Heb. xii, 26–28, as the removal of an earth and heaven which shall give place to an "immovable kingdom." Is there any reason for believing this immovable kingdom to be other than that of which the Lord spoke in Matt. xvi, 28: "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom"? The greatest "glory of that latter house," of which Haggai (ii, 7, 9) spoke, was attained when the Lord Christ entered and taught within its courts; but the destruction of the second temple, and the shaking of "the heaven and the land" which it represented, prepared the way for the nobler temple of "his body, the fulness of him who fills all things in all" (Eph. i, 23). Of this body Christ is the head, the husband, and Saviour (Eph. v, 23), having loved her and given himself for her, "that he might sanctify her, having purified her by the laver of water in the word, that he himself might present to himself in glorious beauty the Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v, 26, 27).[1] This glorious Church is manifestly the same as the Bride, the wife of the Lamb, the holy city, New Jerusalem. It was necessary that the Old Testament visible Church should be shaken and fall and pass away, for its glory had departed; but in its place comes forth "the whole assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. xii, 23).

Allusion of Heb. xii, 22, 23.

If, furthermore, we allow the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews to guide us to a right understanding of the New Jerusalem, we will observe that the communion and fellowship of New Testament saints are apprehended as heaven begun on earth. It is altogether probable that this epistle was

come. But בָּאוּ is plural, and has naturally for its subject the nations (גּוֹיִם) just mentioned. So in Isa. xxxv, 10, "The ransomed of Jehovah shall return, *and come to Zion*, with shouting and everlasting joy upon their heads." When we read further, in Isa. lxv, 18, as explanatory of the new heavens and new land (ver. 17), "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy," we will find therein the surest explanation of the חֶמְדָּה, *delight*, of Hag. ii, 7. The New Jerusalem, the New Testament Church and kingdom of God, is the delight and desire of the nations, which, according to Rev. xxi, 24, walk by the light of it.

[1] "The union of Christ," says Meyer, "with his Church, at the parousia, in order to confer upon it Messianic blessedness, is conceived of by Paul (as also by Christ himself, Matt. xxv, 1; comp. Rev. xix, 7; see also John iii, 29) under the figure of the bringing home of a bride, wherein Christ appears as the bridegroom, and *sets forth* the bride, i. e., his Church, as a spotless virgin (the bodily purity is a representative of the ethical) before himself, after he has already in this age cleansed it by the bath of baptism, and sanctified it through his word."—Critical Com. on Ephesians, in loco.

written after the Book of Revelation,[1] and direct allusions to it are apparent in the following passage: "Ye are come (προσεληλύθατε, ye have already come) unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." The Christian believer, when his life becomes hidden with Christ in God, has already entered into a communion and fellowship that never ceases.[2] His name is enrolled in heaven. He dwells in God and God in him, and all subsequent glorification in time and in eternity is but a continuous and growing realization of the blessedness of the Church and Kingdom of God.

In the vision of the New Jerusalem we have the last New Testament revelation of the spiritual and heavenly blessedness and glory of which the Mosaic tabernacle was a material symbol. The "dwelling of the testimony" (מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת, Exod. xxxviii, 21) and its various vessels and services were "copies of the things in the heavens" (Heb. ix, 23), and Christ has entered into the holy places "through the greater and more perfect tabernacle" (Heb. ix, 11), thereby making it possible for all true believers to enter "with boldness into the entrance way of the holies" (Heb. x, 19). This entrance into the holy places and fellowships is realized only as "we draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and the body washed with pure water" (Heb. x, 22), and such spiritual access is possible to us now. The Alpha and the Omega, accordingly, says: "Blessed are they who wash their robes, that they may have the authority over the tree of life, and by the gates may enter into the city" (Rev. xxii, 14). This city is represented as a perfect cube in form (Rev. xxi, 16), and may therefore be regarded as the heavenly Holy of Holies, into the entrance way (εἴσοδον) of which we may now approach. All this accords with the voice from the throne, which said: "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will tabernacle with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them" (Rev. xxi, 3). Herein we discern the true antitype of the ancient tabernacle and temple, and hence it is that this holy city

New Jerusalem the heavenly outline of what the tabernacle symbolized.

[1] Comp. the "innumerable company of angels" (Heb. xii, 22) with Rev. v, 11; and the "assembly and church enrolled in heaven" with Rev. xiii, 8; xxi, 27; and "spirits of just men made perfect" with Rev. vii, 13–17. References and allusions as direct and explicit as these, made by any of the early Fathers to books of the New Testament, would be regarded by all critics as indisputable evidence of the pre-existence of such books. Comp. Cowles, The Revelation of John, p. 22; Glasgow, The Apocalypse, Translated and Expounded, pp. 29, 30.

[2] Comp. Riehm, Messianic Prophecy, pp. 164–166. Edinb., 1876.

admits of no temple, and no light of sun and moon, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are its light and its temple (Rev. xxi, 22, 23). Moreover, no cherubim appear within this Holy of Holies, for these former symbols of redeemed humanity are now supplanted by the innumerable company of Adam's race, from whom the curse (*κατάθεμα*, Rev. xxii, 3) has been removed, and who take their places about the throne of God and of the Lamb, act as his servants there, behold his face, and have his name upon their foreheads (Rev. xxii, 3, 4).

The New Jerusalem, then, is the apocalyptic portraiture of the New Testament Church and Kingdom of God. Its symbolism exhibits the heavenly nature of the communion and fellowship of God and his people, which is entered here by faith, but which opens into unspeakable fulness of glory through ages of ages.

There is room for differences of opinion in the interpretation of particular passages and symbols in all the apocalyptic Scriptures. But attention to their general harmonies, and a careful study of the scope and outline of each prophecy as a whole, will go far to save us from the hopeless confusion and contradiction into which many by neglecting this method have fallen.

From the foregoing study of biblical apocalyptics we may legitimately derive the following conclusions:

Conclusions.

1. It is of the first importance that this class of prophecies should be studied as a whole, and be seen to constitute a well-connected and inter-dependent series of divine revelations, running through the entire Scriptures.

2. The formal elements of apocalyptics are not of a nature to allow a literal interpretation of all the language employed. In great part the various revelations are set forth in the highly wrought language of metaphor and symbolism. The task of the faithful interpreter is to grasp the great essential thought, and distinguish it from the mere drapery in which it has been clothed. One can afford to miss some incidental parts, and frankly acknowledge inability to determine the exact meaning of such a passage as that touching the "first resurrection" in Rev. xx, 6, if he but truly apprehend the great scope, plan, and import of the prophecy taken as a whole.

3. Too much stress cannot well be laid upon the habit of repetition so conspicuous in all the great apocalypses of the Bible. We believe that the failure in most of the current expositions of the apocalypse of John to note that the second half (xii–xxii) is in the main a repetition of the first (i–xi) under other symbols and from other points of view, has been a fatal hinderance to the true interpretation of this most wonderful book.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NO DOUBLE SENSE IN PROPHECY.

THE hermeneutical principles which we have now set forth necessarily exclude the doctrine that the prophecies of Scripture contain an occult or double sense. It has been alleged by some that as these oracles are heavenly and divine we should expect to find in them manifold meanings. They must needs differ from other books. Hence has arisen not only the doctrine of a double sense, but of a threefold and fourfold sense, and the rabbis went so far as to insist that there are "mountains of sense in every word of Scripture." We may readily admit that the Scriptures are capable of manifold practical *applications;* otherwise they would not be so useful for doctrine, correction, and instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. iii, 16). But the moment we admit the principle that portions of Scripture contain an occult or double sense we introduce an element of uncertainty in the sacred volume, and unsettle all scientific interpretation.[1] "If the Scripture has more than one meaning," says Dr. Owen, "it has no meaning at all." "I hold," says Ryle, "that the words of Scripture were intended to have one definite sense, and that our first object should be to discover that sense, and adhere rigidly to it. . . . To say that words *do* mean a thing merely because they *can* be tortured into meaning it is a most dishonourable and dangerous way of handling Scripture."[2] "This scheme of interpretation," says Stuart, "forsakes and sets aside the common

Theory of a double sense unsettles all sound interpretation.

[1] We count it no gentleness or fair dealing, in a man of power, to require strict and punctual obedience, and yet give out his commands ambiguously. We should think he had a plot upon us. Certainly such commands were no commands, but snares. The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness; the darkness and ignorance are our own. The wisdom of God created understanding, fit and proportionable to truth, the object and end of it, as the eye to the thing visible. If our understanding have a film of ignorance over it, or be blear with gazing on other false glisterings, what is that to truth? If we will but purge with sovereign eye-salve that intellectual ray which God hath planted in us, then we would believe the Scriptures protesting their own plainness and perspicuity, calling to them to be instructed, not only the wise and the learned, but the simple, the poor, the babes.—Milton, Reformation in England, Book i.

[2] Expository Thoughts on St. Luke, vol. i, p. 383.

laws of language. The Bible excepted, in no book, treatise, epistle, discourse, or conversation, ever written, published, or addressed by any one man to his fellow beings (unless in the way of sport, or with an intention to deceive), can a double sense be found. There are, indeed, charades, enigmas, phrases with a *double entente*, and the like, perhaps, in all languages; there have been abundance of heathen oracles which were susceptible of two interpretations; but even among all these there never has been, and there never was a design that there should be, but one sense or meaning in reality. Ambiguity of language may be, and has been, designedly resorted to in order to mislead the reader or hearer, or in order to conceal the ignorance of soothsayers, or to provide for their credit amid future exigencies; but this is quite foreign to the matter of a serious and *bona fide* double meaning of words. Nor can we for a moment, without violating the dignity and sacredness of the Scriptures, suppose that the inspired writers are to be compared to the authors of riddles, conundrums, enigmas, and ambiguous heathen oracles."[1]

Typology and double sense of language not to be confounded.

Some writers have confused this subject by connecting it with the doctrine of type and antitype. As many persons and events of the Old Testament were types of greater ones to come, so the language respecting them is supposed to be capable of a double sense. The second Psalm has been supposed to refer both to David and Christ, and Isa. vii, 14–16, to a child born of a virgin who lived in the time of the prophet, and also to the Messiah. Psalms xlv and lxxii have been supposed to have a double reference to Solomon and Christ, and the prophecy against Edom in Isa. xxxiv, 5–10, to comprehend also the general judgment of the last day.[2] But it should be seen that in the case of types the language of the Scripture has no double sense. The types themselves are such because they prefigure things to come, and this fact must be kept distinct from the question of the sense of language used in any particular passage. We reject as unsound and misleading the theory that such Messianic psalms as the second, forty-fifth and seventy-second have a double sense, and refer first to David, Solomon, or some other ruler, and secondly to Christ. If an historical reference to some great typical character can be shown, the whole case may be relegated to biblical typology, the language naturally explained of the person celebrated in the psalm, and then the person himself may be shown to be a type and illustration of a greater one to come. After this manner the

[1] Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy, p. 14. Andover, 1842.

[2] See Davidson's Hermeneutics, pp. 49, 50. Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, pp. 172–174. Horne, Introduction, vol. ii, pp. 404–408.

great events referred to in the Immanuel prophecy of Isa. vii, 14, and the calling of Israel out of Egypt in Hos. xi, 1, were typically fulfiled in Jesus. The oracle against Edom (Isa. xxxiv, 5–10), like that against Babylon (Isa. xiii, 6–13) is simply a specimen of the highly wrought style of apocalyptic prophecy, and gives no warrant to the theory of a double sense in the word of God. The twenty-fourth of Matthew, often appealed to in support of this theory, is explicable by a much simpler method.

The suggestive fulness of Scripture no proof of a double sense.

Some plausibility is given to the theory by adducing the suggestive fulness of some parts of the prophetic Scriptures. Such fulness is readily admitted, and ever to be extolled. The first prophecy is a good example. The enmity between the seed of the woman and that of the serpent (Gen. iii, 15) has been exhibited in a thousand forms. The precious words of promise to God's people find more or less fulfilment in every individual experience. But these facts do not sustain the theory of a double sense. The sense in every case is direct and simple; the applications and illustrations are many. Such facts give no authority for us to go into apocalyptic prophecies with the expectation of finding two or more meanings in each specific statement, and then to declare: This verse refers to an event long past, this to something yet future; this had a partial fulfilment in the ruin of Babylon, or Edom, but it awaits a grander fulfilment in the future. The judgment of Babylon, or Nineveh, or Jerusalem, may, indeed, be a type of every other similar judgment, and is a warning to all nations and ages; but this is very different from saying that the language in which that judgment was predicted was fulfilled only partially when Babylon, or Nineveh, or Jerusalem fell, and is yet awaiting its complete fulfilment.

We have already seen that the Bible has its riddles, enigmas, and dark sayings, but whenever they are given the context clearly advises us of the fact. To assume, in the absence of any hint, that we have an enigma, and in the face of explicit statements to the contrary, that any specific prophecy has a double sense, a primary and a secondary meaning, a near and a remote fulfilment, must necessarily introduce an element of uncertainty and confusion into biblical interpretation.

No misleading designations of time in prophecy.

The same may be said about explicit designations of time. When a writer says that an event will shortly and speedily come to pass, or is about to take place, it is contrary to all propriety to declare that his statements allow us to believe the event is in the far future. It is a reprehensible abuse of language to say that the words *immediately*, or *near at hand*, mean

ages hence, or *after a long time*. Such a treatment of the language of Scripture is even worse than the theory of a double sense. And yet interpreters have appealed to 2 Peter iii, 8 as furnishing inspired authority to disregard designations of time in prophecy. "Let not this one thing be hid from you, beloved, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This statement, it is urged, is made with direct reference to the time of the Lord's coming, and illustrates the arithmetic of God, in which *soon*, *quickly*, and similar terms may denote ages. A careful attention to this passage, however, will show that it teaches no such strange doctrine as this.

A thousand years as one day.

The language in question is a poetical citation from Psa. xc, 4, and is adduced to show that the lapse of time does not invalidate the promises of God. Whatever he has pledged will come to pass, however men may think or talk about his tardiness. Days and years and ages do not affect him. From everlasting to everlasting he is God (Psa. xc, 2). But this is very different from saying that when the everlasting God promises something *shortly*, and declares that it is *close at hand*, he may mean that it is a thousand years in the future. Whatever he has promised indefinitely he may take a thousand years or more to fulfil; but what he affirms to be at the door let no man declare to be far away. "It is surely unnecessary," says a recent writer, "to repudiate in the strongest manner such a non-natural method of interpreting the language of Scripture. It is worse than ungrammatical and unreasonable, it is immoral. It is to suggest that God has two weights and two measures in his dealings with men, and that in his mode of reckoning there is an ambiguity and variableness which makes it impossible to tell what manner of time the Spirit of Christ in the prophets may signify. It seems to imply that a day may not mean a day, nor a thousand years a thousand years, but that either may mean the other. If this were so, there could be no interpretation of prophecy possible; it would be deprived of all precision, and even of all credibility; for it is manifest that if there could be such ambiguity and uncertainty in respect to *time*, there might be no less ambiguity and uncertainty in respect to every thing else. . . . Faithfulness is one of the attributes most frequently ascribed to the covenant-keeping God, and the divine *faithfulness* is that which the apostle in this very passage affirms. To the taunt of the scoffers who impugn the faithfulness of God, and ask, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' he answers, 'the Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness.' Long or short, a day or an age, does

not affect his faithfulness. He keepeth truth forever. But the apostle does not say that when the Lord promises a thing for *to-day* he may not fulfil his promise for a thousand years: *that would be slackness;* that would be a breach of promise. He does not say that because God is infinite and everlasting, therefore he reckons with a different arithmetic from ours, or speaks to us in a double sense, or uses two different weights and measures in his dealings with mankind. The very reverse is the truth." [1]

Fallacies of Bengel's theory of prophetic perspective.

As an illustration of the fallacious and confusing theory of a double sense, especially when applied to prophetic designations of time, witness the following from Bengel. Commenting on the words, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," in Matt. xxiv, 29, he says: "You will say it is a great leap from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the world which is subjoined to it *immediately.* I reply, a prophecy resembles a landscape painting which represents distinctly the houses, paths, and bridges in the foreground, but brings together, into a narrow space, most widely severed valleys and mountains in the distance. Such a view should they who study prophecy have of the future to which the prophecy refers. And the eyes of the disciples, who in their question had connected the end of the temple with that of the world, are left somewhat in the dark (for it was not yet time to know, ver. 36); hence they afterward, with entire harmony, imitated the Lord's language, and declared that the end was at hand. By advancing, however, both the prophecy and the prospect continually reveal a further and still further distance. In this manner also we ought to interpret, not the clear by the obscure, but the obscure by the clear, and to revere in its dark sayings the divine wisdom which sees all things always, but does not reveal all things at once. Afterward it was revealed that antichrist should come before the end of the world; and again Paul joined these two things closely, until the Apocalypse placed even millenniums between. On such passages there rests, as St. Anthony used to call it, a *prophetical cloudlet.* It was not yet time to reveal the whole series of future events from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the world." [2]

As many fallacies as sentences.

Here, we may say, are almost as many fallacies, or misleading statements, as there are sentences. The figure of a landscape painting with its principles of perspective is a favourite illustration with those expositors who advo-

[1] The Parousia, pp. 221–223.

[2] Gnomon of the New Testament, in loco. Lewis and Vincent's translation. Philadelphia, 1860.

cate the theory of a double sense, and some, who reject such theory, employ this figure to illustrate the uncertainty of prophetic designations of time. But it is a great error to apply this illustration to *specific* designations of time. Where no particular time is indicated, or where time-limitations are kept out of view, the figure may be allowed, and is, indeed, a happy illustration. But when the Lord says that certain events are to follow *immediately after* certain other events, let no interpreter presume to say that millenniums may come between. This is not "to interpret the obscure by the clear," but to obscure the clear by a misleading fancy. To say that "the eyes of the disciples were left in the dark," and that they afterward, "imitating the Lord's language, declared that the end was at hand," is virtually equivalent to saying that Jesus misled them, and that they went forth and perpetuated the error! The notion that any portion of Scripture "reveals the whole series of events from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the world," is a fancy of modern interpreters, who would all do well, like the pious Bengel, to confess that over their forced method of explaining the statements of Christ and the apostles there truly rests an obscuring "prophetical cloudlet."

Practical applications of prophecy may be many.

There are, indeed, manifold applications of certain prophecies which may be called generic, and some events of modern history may illustrate them, and, in a broad sense, fulfil them as truly as the events to which they had original reference. In the days of John many antichrists had appeared (1 John ii, 18; comp. Matt. xxiv, 5, 24), and the demoniacal attributes of Paul's "man of sin" (2 Thess. ii, 3–8) may appear again and again in monsters of lawlessness and crime. Antiochus and Nero are definite typical illustrations in whom great prophecies were specifically fulfilled, but other similar impersonations of wickedness may also have revealed the beast from the abyss, which was, and then, after disappearing for a time, appeared again, and then again went into perdition (Rev. xvii, 8). But such allowable applications of prophecy are not to be confounded with grammatico-historical interpretation. When Satan shall be loosed out of his prison after the millennium (Rev. xx, 7) he may, indeed, reveal himself in some man of sin more fearful and more lawless far than any Antiochus or Nero of the past.

It may, in truth, be said that a large proportion of the confusion and errors of biblical expositors has arisen from mistaken notions of the Bible itself.[1] No such confusion and diversity of views ap-

[1] This thought is made prominent in Hofman's valuable work, Biblische Hermeneutik. Nordlingen, 1880.

pear in the interpretation of other books. A strained and unnatural theory of divine inspiration has, doubtless, led many into the habit of assuming that somehow the Scriptures must be explained differently from other compositions. Hence, also, the assumption that in prophetic revelations God has furnished us with a detailed historical outline of particular occurrences ages in advance, so that we may properly expect to find such events as the rise of Islam, the Wars of the Roses, and the French Revolution recorded in the prophetical books. This assumption is often found attaching itself to the theory of a double or triple sense. The interpretation of the Apocalypse of John has especially suffered from this singular error. There is such a charm in the fancy that we have a New Testament prophecy of the events of all coming time—a graphic outline of the history of the Church and the world until the final judgment—that not a few have yielded to the delusion that we may reasonably search this mystic book for any character or event which we deem important in the history of human civilization.[1]

Mistaken notions of the Bible itself the cause of much false exposition.

We must set aside these false assumptions touching the Bible itself, and the character and purport of its prophecies. A rational investigation of the scope and analogies of the great prophecies gives no support to such extravagant fancies as that "the whole Apocalypse of John, from chapter iv to the end, is but a development of Daniel's imperfect tense."[2] The Holy Scriptures have lessons for all time. God's specific revelation to one individual, age, or nation will be found to have a practical value for all men. We need no specific predictions of Napoleon, or of the Waldenses, or of the martyrdom of John Huss, or of the massacre of St. Bartholomew to confirm the faith of the Church, or to convince the infidel; else, doubtless, we should have had them in a form capable of producing conviction. It cannot be shown that such predictions would have accomplished any worthy purpose not already met by fulfilled prophecies with their practical lessons of universal application.

[1] A friend of the writer once observed: It always seemed strange to me that Babylon, and Persia, and Greece, and Rome, and European states should be noticed in the prophecies, and yet no mention of the United States of America. He, accordingly, set himself to work to find something on the subject, and by and by discovered the great North American Republic in the fifth kingdom of Daniel—the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. Further research in the same line soon enabled him to see that the "war in heaven" between Michael and the dragon (Rev. xii, 7) was a specific prophecy of the late civil war between the Northern and Southern States, which resulted in the abolition of American slavery.

[2] Pre-Millennial Essays of the Prophetic Conference, p. 326. New York, 1879.

CHAPTER XIX.

SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS IN THE SCRIPTURES.

In comparing Scripture with Scripture, and tracing the parallel and analogous passages of the several sacred writers, the interpreter continually meets with quotations, more or less exact, made by one writer from another. These quotations may be distributed into four classes: (1) Old Testament parallel passages and quotations made by the later writers from the earlier books; (2) New Testament quotations from the Old Testament; (3) New Testament quotations from New Testament sources; and (4) quotations from apocryphal writings and oral tradition. The verbal variations of many of these citations, the formulas and methods of quotation, and the illustrations they furnish of the purposes and uses of the Holy Scriptures, are all matters of great importance to the biblical exegete.

Four classes of quotations.

As examples of each of these classes of citations we mention, first, genealogical tables, as Gen. xi, 10–26, compared with 1 Chron. i, 17–27, and Gen. xlvi compared with Num. xxvi. Psa. xviii is substantially identical with 2 Sam. xxii. The same is true of 2 Kings xviii–xx and Isa. xxxvi–xxxix, 2 Kings xxiv, xxv, and Jer. lii. Large portions of the Books of Samuel and Kings are appropriated in the Books of Chronicles, and there are numerous textual parallels like Psa. xlii, 7, and Jonah ii, 3. The New Testament quotations from the Old Testament are manifold in character and form. In most cases they are taken *verbatim*, or nearly so, from the Septuagint version; in some instances they are a translation of the Hebrew text, more accurate than that of the Septuagint (Matt. ii, 15, compared with Heb. and Sept. of Hos. xi, 1; Matt. viii, 17, comp. Isa. liii, 4). Some of the quotations differ notably both from the Hebrew and the Septuagint, while others were apparently constructed by a use of both sources. Sometimes several passages of the Old Testament are blended together, as in 2 Cor. vi, 16–18, where use is made of Exod. xxix, 45; Lev. xxvi, 12; Isa. lii, 11; Jer. xxxi, 1, 9, 33; xxxii, 38; Ezek. xi, 20; xxxvi, 28; xxxvii, 27; Zech. viii, 8. Sometimes the Old Testament passage is merely paraphrased, or the general sentiment or substance is given, while in other cases it is merely referred to

Examples of Scripture quotations and parallels.

or hinted at (comp. Prov. xviii, 4; Isa. xii, 3; xliv, 3, with John vii, 38. Isa. lx, 1–3, with Eph. v, 14. Hos. xiv, 2, with Heb. xiii, 15).[1] In the New Testament it is evident that the many parallel portions of the Gospels must have been derived from some common source, either oral or written, or both. In Acts xx, 35, Paul quotes a saying of the Lord which is to be found nowhere else. Peter evinces a knowledge of the epistles of Paul (2 Pet. iii, 15, 16), and in the second chapter of his second epistle appropriates much from the Epistle of Jude. Finally, the quotations from apocryphal and other sources, and allusions to them, both in the Old Testament and in the New, are quite numerous. Apocryphal and traditional sources.

Thus, in the Old Testament we have "The Book of the Wars of the Lord" (Num. xxi, 14), "The Book of Jasher" (Josh. x, 13), "The Book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings xi, 41), "The Book of Shemaiah" (2 Chron. xii, 15), and numerous others quoted or referred to. Jude quotes apparently from the pseudepigraphal Book of Enoch, and also makes allusion to traditions of the fall of the angels, and the dispute of Michael and the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 6, 9, 14). St. Paul calls the magicians, who opposed Moses, Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. iii, 8), names which had probably been transmitted by oral tradition. Many such traditions found their way into the Targums, the Talmud, and the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal Jewish literature. Quotations from such books and allusions to such traditions give them no canonical authority. An apostle or any one else, addressing those who were familiar with such traditions, might appropriately refer to them for homiletical purposes, without thereby designing to assume or declare their verity. Similarly Paul quotes from the Greek poets Aratus, Menander, and Epimenides (Acts xvii, 28; 1 Cor. xv, 33; Titus i, 12).

The great number of parallel passages, both in the Old Testament and in the New, is evidence of a harmony and organic relation of Scripture with Scripture of a most notable kind. Once written, the oracles of God became the public and private treasure of his people. Any passage that would serve a useful purpose was used by prophet

[1] See Drusius, Parallela Sacra, etc., in vol. viii of the Critici Sacri, pp. 1261–1325; Davidson, Sacred Hermeneutics, chap. xi; Gough, New Testament Quotations Collated with the Old Testament (Lond., 1853); Horne's Introduction (Ayers and Tregelles' Ed.), vol. ii, pp. 113–207; and especially Turpie, The Old Testament in the New; A Contribution to Biblical Criticism and Interpretation. Lond., 1868. This last-named work conveniently classifies and tabulates the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament according to their agreement with, or variation from, both the Hebrew text and the Septuagint version. Comp. also Scott, Principles of New Testament Quotation established and applied to Biblical Science (Edinb., 1875), and Boehl, Die alttestamentlichen Citate im neuen Testament. Wien, 1878.

or apostle as part of a common heritage. With this understanding, there is little in the matter or style of the Scripture quotations in the Scriptures to give any trouble to the interpreter. The comparison of parallel passages is, as we have seen (pp. 119–128), a great help in exposition, and some passages become clear and forcible only when read in the light of their parallels. The alleged discrepancies between these different Scriptures will be noticed in a separate chapter; it is only the Old Testament citations in the New Testament which call for special treatment here. These, as we have said, are so manifold in character and form that we should examine (1) the sources of quotation, (2) the formulas and methods of quotation, and (3) the purposes of the several quotations.

Only the O. T. quotations in the N. T. call for special hermeneutical treatment.

I. It is now generally conceded that the sources from which the New Testament writers quote are the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the Septuagint translation of it. Formerly it was maintained by some that the Septuagint only was used; others, feeling that such a position was disparaging to the Hebrew Scriptures, maintained as strenuously that the apostles and evangelists must have always cited from the Hebrew, and though the quotations were in the exact words of the Septuagint, it was thought that two translators might have used the same language. But calmer study has made all such discussions obsolete. It is well known that the Septuagint version was in current use among the Hellenistic Jews. The New Testament writers follow it in some passages where it differs widely from the Hebrew. A critical comparison of all the New Testament citations from the Old shows beyond a question that in the great majority of cases the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew text was the source from which the writers quoted.[1]

Sources of N. T. quotation.

But it is noticeable that the New Testament writers do not uniformly follow either source. The Septuagint version of Mal. iii, 1, is an accurate translation of the Hebrew, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke agree literally in a rendering which is noticeably different.[2] In short, it is impossible to discover any rule that will account for all the variations between the citations and the Hebrew and Septuagint texts. Sometimes the

No uniform method of quotation.

[1] See Horne's Introduction, vol. ii, pp. 114–178, where the Hebrew, the Septuagint version, and the New Testament citation of all the Old Testament quotations in the New, are given in the original texts, arranged in parallel columns, and each accompanied by an English version.

[2] Matt. xi, 10; Mark i, 10; Luke vii, 27. Matthew inserts *ἐγώ*, and Mark omits *ἔμπροσθέν σου*.

variation is merely a change of person, number, or tense; sometimes it consists of a transposition of words; sometimes in the omission or addition of words and phrases. In many cases only the general sense is given, and often the citation is but an allusion or reference, not a formal quotation at all. In view of all these facts it seems best to understand that the sacred writers followed no uniform method in quoting the older Scriptures. They were familiar both with the Hebrew text and the Septuagint. But textual accuracy had no special weight with them. From childhood the contents of the sacred writings had been publicly and privately made known to them (2 Tim. iii, 15), and they were wont to cite them in familiar discourse without any attempt at verbal accuracy. With them as with us an inaccurate quotation might become common and current on the lips of the people, and, while known by many to differ from the ancient text, was nevertheless sufficiently correct for all practical purposes. How few of us now recite the Lord's prayer accurately? So, doubtless, the inspired writers made use of Scripture, in many instances, without care to conform the quotation with the exact letter of the Hebrew text, or of the common Septuagint version. They quoted probably in most cases from memory, and the Holy Spirit preserved them from any vital error (John xiv, 26). The idea that divine inspiration must necessitate verbal uniformity among the sacred writers is an unnecessary and untenable assumption.[1] Variety marked both the portions and manner of the successive revelations of God (Heb. i, 1).

Inaccurate quotations may become current.

II. The introductory formulas by which quotations from the Old Testament are adduced are many and various, and have been thought by some to be a sort of index or key to the particular purpose of each citation. But we find different formulas used by different writers to introduce one and the

Formulas and methods of quotation.

[1] "In examining cited passages, we perceive," says Davidson, "that every mode of quotation has been employed, from the exactest to the most loose, from the strictest verbal method to the widest paraphrase. But in no case is violence done to the meaning of the original. A sentiment expressed in one connexion in the Old Testament is frequently in the New interwoven with another train of argument; but this is allowable and natural. . . . Let it be remembered, then, that the sacred writers were not bound in all cases to cite the very words of the originals; it was usually sufficient for them to exhibit the sense perspicuously. The same meaning may be conveyed by different terms. It is unreasonable to expect that the apostles should scrupulously abide by the precise words of the passage they quote. . . . In every instance we suppose them to have been directed by the superintending Spirit, who infallibly kept them from error, and guided them in selecting the most appropriate terms where their own judgments would have failed."—Sacred Hermeneutics, pp. 469, 470.

same passage, so that we cannot suppose that in all cases the formula used will direct us to the special purpose of the quotation. The more common formulas are, "It is written," "Thus it is written," "According as it is written," "The Scripture says," "It was said," "According as it is said;" but many other forms are used. The same formulas are used by the Rabbinical writers.[1] Occasionally the place of a citation is indicated, as in Mark xii, 26; Acts xiii, 33; and Rom. xi, 2; but more frequently Moses, the Law, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or some other prophet is mentioned as writing or saying what is quoted. It is assumed that the persons addressed were so familiar with the holy writings that they needed no more specific reference.

"Besides the quotations introduced by these formulas there are a considerable number scattered through the writings of the apostles which are inserted in the train of their own remarks without any announcement whatever of their being cited from others. To the cursory reader the passages thus quoted appear to form a part of the apostle's own words, and it is only by intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament Scriptures, and a careful comparison of these with those of the New Testament, that the fact of their being quotations can be detected. In the common version every trace of quotation is in many of these passages lost, from the circumstance that the writer has closely followed the Septuagint, while our version of the Old Testament is made from the Hebrew. Thus, for instance, in 2 Cor. viii, 21, Paul says, *προνοοῦμεν γὰρ καλὰ οὐ μόνον ἐνώπιον Κυρίου, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐνώπιον ἀνθρώπων*, which, with a change in the mood of the verb, is a citation of the Septuagint version of Prov. iii, 4. Hardly any trace of this, however, appears in the common version, where the one passage reads, 'Providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men;' and the other, 'So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.' So, also in 1 Peter iv, 18, the apostle quotes word for word from the Septuagint version of Prov. xi, 31, the clause *εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸς ποῦ φανεῖται*; a quotation which we should in vain endeavour to trace in the common version of the Proverbs, where the passage in question is rendered 'Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.' Such quotations evidently show how much the minds of the New Testament writers were imbued with the sentiments and expressions of the Old Testament as exhibited in the Alexandrine version."[2]

[1] Many examples are given by Surenhusius, כפר המשוה, sive *Βίβλος Καταλλαγῆς*, pp. 1–36; and by Döpke, Hermeneutik, pp. 60–69.

[2] Alexander, in Kitto's New Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, article Quotations.

The New Testament writers were necessarily familiar with the current Rabbinical methods of interpreting the Old Testament, and they sometimes employed arguments and illustrations derived from the Holy Scripture which are not adapted to convince persons who have not been trained in the same way of thinking. A careful study, for example, of the Epistle to the Hebrews, will discover numerous instances in which the use made of Old Testament citations is not of a nature to influence the judgment of one unfamiliar with the discipline of the Hebrew cultus. Hence we should not study the methods of New Testament citation from the Old Testament for principles of general hermeneutics, but should always remember that the writers were acting under special conditions of mental and religious training. We recognize their profound reverence for the written word, and their divinely inspired use of it for a specific end, and yet maintain that, in many passages, the particular citation, and the argument built upon it, furnish no law of biblical exegesis suitable for universal application.

Furnish no law of general hermeneutics.

There appears no sufficient reason for maintaining that the reference to an Old Testament book by the name of its commonly supposed author commits the apostles, the evangelists, or Christ himself to an authoritative judgment concerning the authenticity and genuineness of the book. Such an inference is unnecessary unless it appears that the purpose of the reference was to express a judgment on that subject. If it can be shown by valid exegesis that the manner of quoting, or the use made of the quotation itself, necessarily involves a personal opinion touching the authorship of the passage, then, of course, the character of the quotation itself determines the question. But the mere allusion to a well-known book, or the mention of its supposed author according to the current opinions of the time, is obviously neither an affirmation nor a denial of the correctness of the common opinion.

Not designed to decide questions of literary criticism.

There is one formula, peculiar to Matthew and John, which deserves more that a passing notice. It first occurs in Matt. i, 22: "*All this has come to pass in order that* what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet *might be fulfiled.*" This is its fullest form; elsewhere it is only *ἵνα πληρωθῇ*, *in order that it might be fulfiled* (Matt. ii, 15; iv, 14; xxi, 4; John xii, 38; xiii, 18; xv, 25; xvii, 12; xviii, 9, 32; xix, 24, 36), but in John's Gospel these words vary in their connexion, as, "in order that the word of Isaiah might be fulfiled;" "in order that the Scripture might be fulfiled;" in order that the word of Jesus

The formula *ἵνα πληρωθῇ*.

might be fulfilled." Sometimes it is written ὅπως πληρωθῇ (Matt. ii, 23; viii, 17; xii, 17), and occasionally τότε ἐπληρώθη, *then was fulfilled.* The great question with interpreters has been to determine the force of the conjunction ἵνα (and ὅπως) in these formulas. Is it *telic*, that is, expressive of *final cause, purpose,* or *design;* or is it *ecbatic*, denoting merely the *outcome* or *result* of something? If telic, it should be translated *in order that;* if ecbatic, it should be rendered *so that.*

Views of Bengel and Meyer.

Bengel, commenting on the words ἵνα πληωθῇ in Matt. i, 22, observes: "Wherever this phrase occurs we are bound to recognise the authority of the evangelists, and (however dull our own perception may be) to believe that the event they mention does not merely chance to correspond with some ancient form of speech, but was one which had been predicted, and which the divine truth was pledged to bring to pass at the commencement of the new dispensation."[1] Meyer, commenting on the same passage, observes: "ἵνα is never ecbatic, *so that,* but always telic, *in order that;* it presupposes here that what was done stood in the connexion of purpose with the Old Testament declaration, and consequently in the connexion of the divine necessity as an actual fact by which the prophecy was destined to be fulfilled. The divine decree, expressed in the latter, must be accomplished, and to that end *this,* namely, which is related from verse 18 onward, *came to pass,* and that, according to the whole of its contents (ὅλον)."

The telic force of ἵνα generally to be maintained.

This view of the telic force of ἵνα, especially in the words ἵνα πληρωθῇ in connexion with prophetic statements, is maintained by many of the most eminent critics and scholars, as Fritzsche, De Wette, Olshausen, Alford, and Winer. Others, as Tittmann, Stuart, and Robinson, contend for the ecbatic use of ἵνα in this phrase as well as in many other passages.[2] The question can be determined only by a critical examination of the passages where the alleged ecbatic use of the particle occurs. In most of these cases we believe the ordinary telic sense of ἵνα has been misapprehended by a superficial view of the real import of the passage. Thus Tittmann cites Mark xi, 25, as a clear instance of the ecbatic use of ἵνα: "Whenever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one, in order that your Father also who is in the heavens may forgive you your trespasses."

[1] Gnomon of the New Testament, in loco.

[2] See Tittmann's essay on the "Use of the particle ἵνα in the New Testament," translated into English with introductory remarks by M. Stuart in the Biblical Repository of Jan., 1835. Also Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament under the words ἵνα and ὅπως.

According to Tittmann, "the Saviour could not inculcate on his disciples the mere prudential duty of forgiving others *in order that* they themselves might obtain forgiveness, which would be quite foreign to real integrity and purity of mind; but he wished them to consider that if they cherished an implacable spirit they could have no grounds to hope for pardon from God; so that if they themselves were not ready to forgive it was impossible that they should obtain forgiveness."[1] But this reasoning would exclude everywhere the telic force of *ἵνα*. According to the writer's own admission, the forgiving of others is an indispensable condition of pardon; why not then regard this condition, as well as any other, in the light of a means to an end? Is it possible to believe that obtaining forgiveness from God is an object and aim at all inconsistent with "real integrity and purity of mind?" Much more soundly does Meyer give the real thought of the passage: "To the exhortation to confidence in prayer Jesus links on another principal requisite of being heard—namely, the necessity of forgiving in order to obtain forgiveness."[2] The forgiving is presented as an indispensable means to an end.

The ecbatic sense of *ἵνα* need not in all cases be denied.

It need not, however, be denied that in some passages the ecbatic rendering of *ἵνα* may bring out more clearly the sense of the author. The particle may be allowed some measure of its native telic import, and yet the final cause or end may be conceived of as an accomplished result or attainment rather than an objective ideal necessary to be reached.[3] Ellicott's position may be accepted as every way sound and satisfactory: "The uses of *ἵνα* in the New Testament appear to be three: (1) *Final*, or indicative of the *end*, *purpose*, or *object* of the action —the primary and principal meaning, and never to be given up except on the most distinct counter arguments. (2) *Sub-final*, occasionally, especially after verbs of entreaty (not of command), the subject of the prayer being blended with, and even in some cases obscuring, the *purpose* of making it. (3) *Eventual*, or indicative of result, apparently in a few cases, and due, perhaps, more to what is called 'Hebrew teleology' (i. e., the reverential aspect under which the Jews regarded prophecy and its fulfilment) than grammatical depravation."[4]

[1] Biblical Repository for Jan., 1835, p. 105.

[2] Critical Commentary on Mark xi, 25.

[3] Comp. Winer's New Testament Grammar (English translation, Andover, 1874), pp. 457–461, and Buttmann's Grammar of the New Testament Greek (English translation, Andover, 1873), pp. 235–241.

[4] Critical and Grammatical Commentary on Ephesians i, 17.

ἵνα telic in formulas of prophetic citation.

But when the words *ἵνα πληρωθῇ* are used in connexion with the fulfilment of prophecy we should not hesitate to accept the telic force of *ἵνα*. The Scriptures themselves recognise a sort of divine necessity for the fulfilment of all that predicted or typified the Christ. As it was necessary (*ἔδει*) for the Christ to suffer (Luke xxiv, 26), so "it was necessary that all things which were written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning him should be fulfilled" (Luke xxiv, 44; comp. the *ἔδει πληρωθῆναι* of Acts i, 16). The objection that it is absurd to suppose all these things were done merely to fulfil a prophecy is based upon a misconception and misrepresentation of the evangelist. The statement that this particular divine purpose was served does not imply that no other divine purpose was accomplished. "All these things did transpire," says Whedon, "in order, among other purposes, to the fulfilment of that prophecy, inasmuch as the fulfilment of that prophecy was at the same time the accomplishment of the Incarnation of the Redeemer, and the verification of the divine prediction. Nor is there any predestinarian fatalism in all this. God predicts what he foresees that men will freely do; and then men do freely in turn fulfil what God predicts, and so unconsciously act in order to verify God's veracity. Moreover there is no fatalism in supposing that God has high plans which he does with infinite wisdom carry out through the free, unnecessitated, though foreseen wills of men. Such is his inconceivable wisdom that he can so place free agents in a free system of probation that which ever way they freely turn they will but further his great generic plans and verify his foreknowledge. So that it may, in a right sense, be true that all these things are done by free agents *in order to* so desirable an end as to fulfil the divine foresight."[1]

Hosea xi, 1, as cited in Matt. ii, 15.

The passage in Matt. ii, 15, has been thought by many to be a certain instance of the ecbatic usage of *ἵνα*. It is there written that Joseph arose and took the child Jesus and his mother by night and withdrew into Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, "in order that (*ἵνα πληρωθῇ*) it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt I called my son." The quotation is a literal translation of the Hebrew of Hos xi, 1, and the reference of the prophet is to Israel. The whole verse of Hos. xi, 1, reads thus: "For a child was Israel, and I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." Here some would see a double sense of prophecy, and others an Old Testament text accommodated to a New Testament use. But the true interpretation of this quotation will recog-

[1] Commentary on Matthew i, 22.

nise the typical character of Israel as "God's firstborn," a familiar thought of the Old Testament Scripture. Thus, in Exod. iv, 22, Jehovah is represented as saying: "My son, my firstborn, is Israel." And again in Jer. xxxi, 9: "For I have been to Israel for a father, and Ephraim is my firstborn." Compare also Isa. xlix, 3. Recognising this typical character of Israel as God's firstborn son, the evangelist readily perceived that the ancient exodus of Israel out of Egypt was a type of this event in the life of the Son of God while he was yet a child. Among the other purposes (and there were doubtless many) that were served by this going down into Egypt, and exodus therefrom, was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Hosea. This fulfilment of typical events, as we have shown above (p. 384), does not authorize the doctrine of a double sense in the language of prophecy. The words of Hosea xi, 1, have but one meaning, and announce in poetic form a fact of Israel's ancient history. That fact was a type which was fulfilled in the event recorded in Matt. ii, but the language used by the prophet had no previous fulfilment. It was not a prediction at all, but an allusion to an event which occured six hundred years before Hosea was born.[1]

III. It remains to notice the purposes for which any of the sacred writers quoted or referred to the more ancient Scriptures. Attention to this point will be an important aid in enabling us to understand and appreciate the various uses of the holy writings.

Purposes of Scripture quotation.

1. The citation of many ancient prophecies was manifestly for the purpose of showing and putting on record their fulfilment. This is true of all the prophecies which are introduced with the formula *ἵνα πληρωθῇ*, *in order that it might be fulfilled.* And the same thought is implied in the context of quotations introduced by

[1] Lange (Commentary on Matthew ii, 15) has the following: "As the flight and the return had really taken place, the evangelist, whose attention was always directed to the fulfilment of prophecy, might very properly call attention to the fact that even this prediction of Hosea had been fulfilled. And, in truth, viewed not as a verbal but as a typical prophecy, this prediction was fulfilled by this flight into Egypt. Israel of old was called out of Egypt as the son of God, inasmuch as Israel was identified with the Son of God. But now the Son of God himself was called out of Egypt, who came out of Israel, as the kernel from the husk. When the Lord called Israel out of Egypt, it was with special reference to his Son; that is, in view of the high spiritual place which Israel was destined to occupy. In connexion with this it is also important to bear in mind the historical influence of Egypt on the world at large. Ancient Greek civilization—nay, in a certain sense, the imperial power of Rome itself —sprung from Egypt; in Egypt the science of Christian theology originated; from Egypt proceeded the last universal Conqueror; out of Egypt came the typical son of God to found the theocracy; and thence also the true Son of God to complete the theocracy."

other formulas. These facts exhibit the interdependence and organic connexion of the entire body of Holy Scripture. It is a divinely constructed whole, and the essential relations of its several parts must never be forgotten.

2. Other quotations are made for the purpose of establishing a doctrine. So Paul, in Rom. iii, 9–19, quotes the Scriptures to prove the universal depravity of man; and in Rom. iv, 3, he cites the record of Abraham's belief in God to show that a man is justified by faith rather than works, and that faith is imputed unto him for righteousness. This manner of his using the Old Testament obviously implies that the apostle and his readers regarded it as authoritative in its teachings. What was written therein, or could be confirmed thereby, was final, and must be accepted as the revelation of God.

3. Sometimes the Scripture is quoted for the purpose of confuting and rebuking opponents and unbelievers. Jesus himself appealed to his Jewish opponents on the ground of their regard for the Scriptures, and showed their inconsistency in refusing to receive him of whom the Scriptures so abundantly testified (John v, 39, 40). With those who accepted the Scripture as the word of God such argumentation was of great weight. How effectually Jesus employed it may be seen in his answers to the Sadducees and Pharisees (Matt. xxii, 29–32, 41–46). Compare John x, 34–36.

4. Finally, the Scriptures were cited or referred to in a general way as a book of divine authority, for rhetorical purposes, and for illustration. Its manifold treasures were the heritage of the people of God. Its language would be naturally appropriated to express any thought or idea which a writer or speaker might wish to clothe in sacred and venerable form. Hence the manners, references, allusions, and citations which serve mainly to enhance the force or beauty of a statement, and to illustrate some argument or appeal. "The writings of the Jewish prophets," says Horne, "which abound in fine descriptions, poetical images, and sublime diction, were the classics of the later Jews; and, in subsequent ages, all their writers affected allusions to them, borrowed their images and descriptions, and very often cited their identical words when recording any event or circumstance that happened in the history of the persons whose lives they were relating, provided it was similar and parallel to one that occurred at the times, and was described in the books, of the ancient prophets."[1]

[1] Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, vol. ii, p. 191.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE ACCOMMODATION.

Inasmuch as many passages of the Old Testament Scripture are appropriated by New Testament writers for the sake of illustration, or by way of special application, it has been held by many that all the Old Testament quotations, even the Messianic prophecies, have been applied in the New Testament in a sense differing more or less widely from their original import. This especially has been a position taken by many rationalists of Germany, and some have gone so far as to teach that our Lord accommodated himself to the prejudices of his age and people. His use of Scripture, they tell us, was of the nature of argument and appeal *ad hominem;* even his words and acts in regard to unclean spirits of demons, and other matters of belief among the Jews, were a falling in line with the errors and superstitions of the common people. The rationalistic theory

Such a theory of accommodation should be utterly repudiated by the sober and thoughtful exegete. It virtually teaches that Jesus Christ was a propagator of falsehood. It would convict every New Testament writer of a species of mental and religious delusion. The divine Teacher did, indeed, accommodate his teaching to the capacity of his hearers, as every wise teacher will do; or, rather, he condescended to put himself on the plane of their limited knowledge. He would speak so that men might understand, and believe, and be saved. But in those who had no disposition to search and test his truth he declared that Isaiah's words (Isa. vi, 9, 10) received a new application, and a most significant fulfilment (Matt. xiii, 14, 15). And this was strictly true. Isaiah's words were first spoken to the dull and blinded hearts of the Israel of his own day. Ezekiel repeated them with equal propriety to the Israel of a later generation (Ezek. xii, 2). And our Lord quoted and applied them to the Israel of his time as one of those homiletic Scriptures which are fulfilled again and again in human history when the faculties of spiritual perception become perversely dull to the truths of God. The prophecy in question was not the prediction of a specific event, but a general oracle of God, and of such a nature as to be capable of repeated fulfilments. Should be repudiated.

Hence such prophecies afford no proof of a double sense. The sense is in each instance simple and direct, but the language is capable of double or manifold applications.

The true idea of accommodation.

And herein we observe a true sense in which the words of Scripture may be accommodated to particular occasions and purposes. It is found in the manifold uses and applications of which the words of divine inspiration are capable. This is not, strictly speaking, a manifold *fulfilment* of Scripture, though it may be affirmed that a forcible and legitimate application of a passage is truly a fulfilment of it. When a given passage is of such a character as to be susceptible of application to other circumstances or subjects than those to which it first applied, such secondary application should not be denied the name of a fulfilment. In such a case we do not say: The first reference was to an event near at hand, but that primary fulfilment did not exhaust the meaning; its higher fulfilment is to be seen in a future event. Much truth may attach to such a statement, but it is liable to mislead one, and to foster the idea of a hidden sense, a mystic meaning, a so-called hyponoia (*ὑπόνοια*). Thus the psalmist says: "I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old" (Psa. lxxviii, 2). This is quoted by Matthew (xiii, 35), the first sentence according to the Septuagint, the second a free rendering of the Hebrew, but following strictly neither the Hebrew nor the Septuagint. The evangelist affirms that Jesus made use of parables in order that these words might be fulfilled. And we are not at liberty to deny that this was one real purpose of Jesus in the use of parables. The words of the psalmist prophet herein found a new and higher application, but in no different sense than that in which they were first used.

Jer. xxxi, 15, as cited in Matt. ii, 17, 18.

The language of Jer. xxxi, 15, is quoted by Matthew (ii, 17, 18) as being fulfilled in the weeping and lamentation occasioned by Herod's slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem. In the highest strain of poetical conception the prophet Jeremiah sets forth the grief of Israel's woes and exile. It seems to him as if the affectionate Rachel—the mother of the house of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xxx, 24; xli, 51, 52), and the mother of Benjamin (Gen. xxxv, 16–18), might be heard weeping and wailing at Ramah over the loss of her children. The prophet mentions Ephraim (Jer. xxxi, 18, 20) as the chief tribe and representative of all Israel. The tender mother's agony is over a wider woe than the exile of Judah only. It takes in Ephraim's overthrow and captivity as well. And Rachel, rather than Leah, is named because of her great desire for children (Gen. xxx, 1), and

the touching and melancholy circumstances of her death (Gen. xxxv, 18). The weeping is represented as heard at Ramah, perhaps for various reasons. That city occupied a conspicuous eminence [1] in the tribe-territory of Benjamin, whence the lamentation might be conceived as sounding far and wide through all the coasts of Benjamin and Judah.[2] Ramah was the home of Hannah (the mother of Samuel, 1 Sam. i, 19, 20), whose motherly yearning was so much like that of Rachel.[3] It was at Ramah also where the Jewish exiles were gathered before their deportation to Babylon (Jer. xl, 1). The heart of Rachel, in the prophet's view, was large enough to feel and lament the woes of all the sons of Jacob. All this comes up to the evangelist when he pens the slaughter of the children of the coasts of Bethlehem (Matt. ii, 16). It seems to him as if the motherly heart of Rachel cried from the tomb again, and this later sorrow was but a repetition of that of the exile, the former sorrow being a type of the latter. And this was a fulfilment of that poetic prophecy, although it is not said that this sorrow of Bethlehem came to pass *in order to fulfil* the words of Jeremiah. By a true and legitimate accommodation the words of the prophet were appropriated by the evangelist as enhancing his record of that bitter woe. "By keeping in mind," says Davidson, "the close relation of type and antitype, whether the former be a person, as David, or an event, as the birth of a child, we shall not stumble at the manner in which certain quotations in the New Testament are introduced, nor have recourse to other modes of explanation which seem to be objectionable. We do not adopt, with some, the hypothesis of a double sense, to which there are weighty objections. Neither do we conceive that the principle of accommodation, in its mildest form, comes up to the truth. The passages containing typical prophecies have always a direct reference to facts or things in the history of the persons or people obviously spoken of in the context. But these facts or circumstances were typical of spiritual transactions in the history of the Saviour and his kingdom." [4]

[1] Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i, p. 576.

[2] Comp. Keil, Commentary on Jeremiah xxxi, 15.

[3] "The prophet goes back in spirit," says Nägelsbach, "to the time when the inhabitants of the kingdom of the ten tribes were led away to Assyria into captivity. . . . The mother of the ruling tribe appears thus as the personification of the kingdom ruled by it. The spirit of Rachel is the genius of the kingdom of the ten tribes whom the prophet represented by a bold poetical figure as rising from her tomb by night and bewailing the misery of her children."—Commentary on Jeremiah xxxi, 15.

[4] Sacred Hermeneutics, p. 488.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALLEGED DISCREPANCIES OF THE SCRIPTURES.

General character of the discrepancies.

In comparing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and also in examining the statements of the different writers of either Testament, the reader's attention is occasionally arrested by what appear to be contradictions. Sometimes different passages of the same book present some noticeable inconsistency, but more frequently the statements made by different writers exhibit discrepancies which some critics have been hasty to pronounce irreconcilable. These discrepancies are found in the genealogical tables, and in various numerical, historical, doctrinal, ethical, and prophetical statements. It is the province of the interpreter of Scripture to examine these with great patience and care; he must not ignore any difficulty, but should be able to explain the apparent inconsistencies, not by dogmatic assertions or denials, but by rational methods of procedure. If he find a discrepancy or a contradiction which he is unable to explain he should not hesitate to acknowledge it. It does not follow that because he is not able to solve the problem it is therefore insoluble. The lack of sufficient data has often effectually baffled the efforts of the most able and accomplished exegetes.

Causes of the discrepancies.

A large proportion of the discrepancies of the Bible are traceable to one or more of the following causes: The errors of copyists in the manuscripts; the variety of names applied to the same person or place; different methods of reckoning times and seasons; different local and historical standpoints; and the special scope and plan of each particular book. Variations are not contradictions, and many essential variations arise from different methods of arranging a series of particular facts. The peculiarities of oriental thought and speech often involve seeming extravagance of statement and verbal inaccuracies, which are of a nature to provoke the criticism of the less impassioned writers of the West. And it is but just to add that not a few of the alleged contradictions of Scripture exist only in the imagination of sceptical writers, and are to be attributed to the perverse misunderstanding of captious critics.

It is easy to perceive how, in the course of ages, numerous

little errors and discrepancies would be likely to find their way into the text by reason of the oversight or carelessness of transcribers. To this cause we attribute many of the variations in orthography and in numerical statements. The habit of expressing numbers by letters, several of which closely resemble each other, was liable to occasion many discrepancies. Sometimes the omission of a letter or a word occasions a difficulty which cannot now be removed. Thus the only proper rendering of the present Hebrew text of 1 Sam. xiii, 1, is, "Saul was a year old (Hebrew, son of a year) when he began to reign, and two years he reigned over Israel." The writer is here evidently following the custom exhibited in 2 Sam. ii, 10; v, 4; 1 Kings xiv, 21; xxii, 42; 2 Kings viii, 26, of opening his account of a king's reign with a formal statement of his age when he became king, and of the number of years that he reigned. But the numbers have been lost from the text, and the omission is older than the Septuagint version which follows our present corrupt Hebrew text. The following form may best present the passage with its omissions: "Saul was —— years old when he began to reign, and he reigned —— and two years over Israel." These omissions can now be supplied only by conjecture. It is evident that Saul was more than a year old when he began to reign, and that he reigned more than two years. According to Acts xiii, 21, and Josephus (Ant., vi, 14, 9) he reigned forty years, but this may include the seven years and a half assumed to have passed between the death of Saul and that of Ishbosheth (2 Sam. ii, 11). Ishbosheth, however, is said to have reigned but two years (2 Sam. ii, 10). The language of Paul and Josephus more likely expresses a current Jewish tradition which was not exact.

Discrepancies arising from errors of copyists.

A comparison of genealogical tables often exhibits discrepancies in names and numbers. But the transcription and repetition of such records through a long period of time, and by many different scribes, would naturally expose them to numerous variations. A comparison of the family record of Jacob and his sons, the seventy souls that came into Egypt (Gen. xlvi), with that of the census of these families in the time of Moses (Num. xxvi) will serve to illustrate the peculiarities of Hebrew genealogies. We give these lists, on the adjoining page, in parallel columns, and also select from the lists in 1 Chron. ii–viii the corresponding names, so far as they appear there, that the reader may see at a glance the variations in orthography. For convenience of reference we place the corresponding names opposite each other; but the student should note the variations in the order of names as they appear in these different lists. The list

Discrepancies in genealogical tables.

in Genesis is arranged according to the wives and concubines of Jacob. The first thirty-three include Jacob and the sons and daughter of Leah; the next sixteen are the sons of Zilpah; the next fourteen are the sons of Rachel; and the remaining seven are the sons of Bilhah. It is a manifest purpose to make the list number "seventy souls." In Num. xxvi the order of names follows no apparent plan.[1]

Jacob's family record.

	Gen. xlvi.	Num. xxvi.	1 Chron. ii-viii.
	1. **JACOB.**		
	2. REUBEN	REUBEN	REUBEN.
	3. Hanoch	Hanoch	Hanoch.
	4. Phallua	Phallua	Phallua.
		(Descendants.)	
	5. Hezron	Hezron	Hezron.
	6. Carmi	Carmi	Carmi.
	7. SIMEON	SIMEON	SIMEON.
	8. Jemuel	* Nemuel	* Nemuel.
	9. Jamin	Jamin	Jamin.
	10. Ohad	——	——
	11. Jachin	Jachin	* Jarib.
	12. Zohar	* Zerah	* Zerah.
	13. Shaul	Shaul	Shaul.
LEAH'S SONS—33.	14. LEVI	LEVI	LEVI.
	15. Gershon	Gershon	* Gershom.
		(Descendants.)	
	16. Kohath	Kohath	Kohath.
	17. Merari	Merari	Merari.
		(Descendants.)	
	18. JUDAH	JUDAH	JUDAH.
	19. Er. **Hezron**	Er. **Hezron**	Er. **Hezron.**
	20. Onan. **Hamul**	Onan. **Hamul**	Onan. **Hamul.**
	21. Shelah	Shelah	Shelah.
	22. Pherez	Pherez	Pherez.
	23. Zerah	Zerah	Zerah.
	24. ISSACHAR	ISSACHAR	ISSACHAR.
	25. Tola	Tola	Tola.
	26. Phuvah	Phuvah	* Phuah.
	27. Job	* Jashub	* Jashib.
	28. Shimron	Shimron	Shimron.
	29. ZEBULUN	ZEBULUN	ZEBULUN.
No genealogy recorded.	30. Sered	Sered	
	31. Elon	Elon	
	32. Jahleel	Jahleel	
	33. Dinah	——	

[1] The names of the tribes, or tribe-fathers, are frequently written, but in no two places do they stand in the same order. Comp. Gen. xxix, 32 – xxx, 24; xlix; Exod. i, 1–5; Num. i, 5–15 and 20–47; xiii, 1–16; xxxiv, 17–28; Deut. xxxiii.

	Gen. xlvi.	Num. xxvi.	1 Chron. ii-viii.	
	34. GAD	GAD	GAD.	
	35. Ziphion	* Zephon		No genealogy, but see 1 Chronicles v, 11–17.
	36. Haggi	Haggi		
	37. Shuni	Shuni		
	38. Ezbon	* Ozni		
	39. Eri	Eri		
	40. Arodi	* Arod		
	41. Areli	Areli		
Zilpah's Sons—16.	42. ASHER	ASHER	ASHER.	
	43. Jimnah	Jimnah	Jimnah.	
	44. Jishvah	——	Jishvah.	
	45. Jishvi	Jishvi	Jishvi.	
	46. Beriah	Beriah	Beriah.	
	47. Serah	Serah	Serah.	
	48. **Heber**	**Heber**	**Heber.**	
	49. **Malchiel**	**Malchiel**	**Malchiel.**	
	50. JOSEPH	JOSEPH	JOSEPH.	
	51. Manasseh	Manasseh (Descendants.)	Manasseh.	
	52. Ephraim	Ephraim (Descendants.)	Ephraim.	
	53. BENJAMIN	BENJAMIN	BENJAMIN.	
	54. Bela	Bela	Bela.	
	55. Becher	——	(Comp. Heb. text of 1 Chron. viii, 1.)	
Rachel's Sons—14.	56. Ashbel	Ashbel	Ashbel.	
	57. Gera	——	**Gera.**	
	58. Naaman	**Naaman**	**Naaman.**	
	59. Ehi	* Ahiram	* Aharah.	
	60. Rosh	——	——	
	61. Muppim	Sheshupham	**Shephuphan.**	
	62. Huppim	* Hupham	——	
	63. Ard	**Ard**	* **Addar.**	
	64. DAN	DAN	DAN.	
	65. Hushim	* Shuham	——	
	66. NAPHTALI	NAPHTALI	NAPHTALI.	
	67. Jahzeel	Jahzeel	* Jahzeel.	
	68. Guni	Guni	Guni.	
Bilhah's Sons—7.	69. Jezer	Jezer	Jezer.	
	70. Shillem	Shillem	* Shallum.	

* The asterisk is designed to call attention to several variations in orthography; the small capitals designate the tribe-fathers; names in black letter are supposed levirate substitutions of grandchildren; and the word (descendants) stands in place of names given in the Scripture record, but for want of room not printed above.

In studying these lists of names, it is important to attend to the historical position and purpose of each writer. The list of Gen. xlvi was probably prepared in Egypt, some time after the migration of Jacob and his family thither. It was

Historical standpoint.

probably prepared, in the form in which it there stands, by the sanction of Jacob himself.[1] The aged and chastened patriarch went down into Egypt with the divine assurance that God would make him a great nation, and bring him up again (Gen. xlvi, 3, 4). Great interest therefore would attach to his family register, as it was made out under his own direction. But at the time of the census of Num. xxvi, whilst the names of the heads of families are all carefully preserved, they have become differently arranged, and other names have become prominent. Numerous later descendants have become historically conspicuous, and are accordingly added under the proper family heads. The tables given in 1 Chron. i–ix show much more extensive additions and changes. The peculiar differences between the lists show that one has not been copied from the other; nor were both taken from a common source. They were evidently prepared independently, each from a different standpoint, and for a definite purpose.

We should notice also the peculiar Hebrew methods of thought and expression as exhibited in the ancient list of Gen. xlvi. In verses 8 and 15 Jacob is included among his own sons, and the immortal thirty-three, which includes the father and one daughter, and two great-grandsons (Hezron and Hamul) probably not yet born when Jacob moved into Egypt, are desig-

Hebrew style and usage.

[1] The following suggestive observations of Dr. Mahan, in his little work entitled "The Spiritual Point of View; An Answer to Bishop Colenso" (New York, 1863, pp. 57, 58), illustrate how many considerations and circumstances may have naturally influenced in the preparation of this genealogy. "Jacob's family list, whether written in any way or merely committed to memory, contained before he went into Egypt precisely *seventy* souls; though *four* of these, namely, his two wives and two of the sons of Judah, were souls of the departed. Thus, arithmetically, and in a matter-of-fact way, Jacob had *sixty-six* in his company when he first settled in Egypt; but religiously, or, as some might say, poetically—in the spirit of the little maid of Wordsworth's ballad, who insisted so strenuously 'we are seven'—he might still count them seventy. To this fact may be added the following probabilities: When Jacob arrived in Egypt he probably gave to his list the title or heading which it still bears, namely, *The names of the children of Israel which came with him into Egypt.* And it is likely enough that he did this without troubling himself to erase, either from the tablets or his memory, the names of the dear departed souls whom the kind-hearted and faithful patriarch still regarded as 'of his company.' At a later date, however, he may have revised his list. Affectionate heads of families are apt to do such things. Their family list is the solace of their old age; and they turn it over and over as fondly as a miser counts over his hoarded money. The patriarch, then, turning his list over in this way, and counting his seventy souls which the Lord had given him, and reluctant to erase his four departed souls, availed himself of the first opportunity to substitute for them four new souls—among his great-grandchildren—whom the Lord had granted him *in their place.* Thus the names of the grandchildren of Judah and Asher may easily have come in. No other names were added, because no others were needed."

nated as "all the souls of his sons and his daughters." Similar usage appears in Exod. i, 5, where it is said that "all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls."[1] The writer has in mind the memorable "seventy" that came into Egypt (comp. Deut. x, 22). In Gen. xlvi, 27, the two sons of Joseph, who are expressly said to have been "born to him in Egypt," are reckoned among the seventy who "came into Egypt." It is a carping and captious criticism which fastens upon peculiarities of Hebrew *usus loquendi* like these, and pronounces them "remarkable contradictions, involving such plain impossibilities that they cannot be regarded as true narratives of actual historical matters of fact."[2]

The probable reason for reckoning Hezron and Hamul (verse 12) among the seventy was that they were adopted by Judah in the places of the deceased Er and Onan, who died in the land of Canaan. This appears from the fact that in the later registers of Num. xxvi and 1 Chron. ii they appear as permanent heads of families in Judah. Heber and Malchiel, grandsons of Asher (ver. 17), are also reckoned among the seventy, and probably for the reason that they were born before the migration into Egypt. They also appear in the later lists as heads of families in Israel.

In the list of Gen. xlvi, 21, the names of Naaman and Ard appear among the sons of Benjamin, but in Num. xxvi, 40, they appear as sons of Bela. The most probable explanation of this discrepancy is that the Naaman and Ard, mentioned in Gen. xlvi, 21, died in Egypt without issue, and two of their brother Bela's sons were named after them, and substituted in their place to perpetuate intact the families of Benjamin. In 1 Chron. viii many other names appear among the sons of Benjamin and Bela, but whether Nohah and Rapha were substituted for families that had become extinct, or are other names for some of the same persons who appear in the list of Gen. xlvi, it is now impossible to

Substitution of names.

[1] In the mention of *seventy-five souls*, Acts vii, 14, Stephen simply follows the reading of the Septuagint.

[2] Bishop Colenso on the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua (New York, 1863), p. 60. This remarkable critic quotes Gen. xlvi, 12, and then observes: "It appears to me to be certain that the writer here means to say that Hezron and Hamul were *born in the land of Canaan*." But it is absolutely certain that that is one particular thing which the writer *does not say*. Again, after quoting Exod. i, 1, 5, and Deut. x, 22, he observes: "I assume that it is absolutely undeniable that the narrative of the Exodus distinctly involves the statement, that the sixty-six persons 'out of the loins of Jacob,' mentioned in Gen. xlvi, and no others (!), went down with him into Egypt." Mark the words "*and no others*," although Jacob's sons' wives are expressly mentioned in Gen. xlvi, 26. Such a critic would appear to be utterly incapable of grasping the spirit and style of the Hebrew writers.

determine. Ashbel is mentioned as second in Chronicles, but in Gen. xlvi he stands third.[1] Gera, the fourth name in the list in Genesis, appears twice in 1 Chron. viii, 3, 5, among the sons of Bela. Such variations evince the independence of the different lists, and yet they are of a nature to confirm rather than discredit the genuineness of the several genealogies. Each list had its own distinct history and purpose.

It was in accordance with the Hebrew spirit and custom to frame a register of honoured names so as to have them produce a definite and suggestive number. So Matthew's genealogy of our Lord is arranged into three groups of fourteen names each (Matt. i, 17), and yet this could be done only by the omission of several important names.[2] While the compiler might, by another process equally correct, have made the list of Gen. xlvi number sixty-nine by omitting Jacob, or have made it exceed seventy by adding the names of the wives of Jacob's sons, he doubtless purposely arranged it so as to make it number seventy souls. The number of the descendants of Noah, as given in the genealogical table of Gen. x, amounts to seventy. This habit of using fixed numbers, being a help to memory, may have originated in the necessities of oral tradition. The seventy elders of Israel were probably chosen with some reference to the families that sprung from these seventy souls of Jacob's household, and Jesus' sending out of seventy disciples (Luke x, 1) is evidence that his mind was influenced by the mystic significance of the number seventy.

Legal and lineal genealogies often differ.

It is well known that intermarriages between the tribes, and questions of legal right to an inheritance, affected a person's genealogical status. Thus, in Num. xxxii, 40, 41, it is said that Moses gave the land of Gilead to Machir, the son of Manasseh, "and Jair, the *son of Manasseh*, went and seized their hamlets, and called them Havoth-jair" (comp. 1 Kings iv, 13). This inheritance, therefore, belonged to the tribe of Manasseh; but a comparison of 1 Chron. ii, 21, 22, shows that by lineal descent Jair belonged to the tribe of Judah, and is so reckoned by the chronicler, who also gives the facts which explain the whole case. He informs us that Hezron, the son of Pharez, the son of Judah, married the daughter of Machir, the son of Manasseh,

[1] Perhaps for ובכר, *and Becher*, in Gen. xlvi, 21, we should read בכרו, *his firstborn*.

[2] "According to the evangelist," says Upham, "the time-cycles of the Hebrews (and if so, the time-cycles of the world) had relations to the coming of the Lord. He points out that the life of the Hebrews unrolled in three time-harmonies, one ending in triumph, one in mourning; and thus may intimate that in the end of the third the notes of the two former blend."—Thoughts on the Holy Gospels, p. 199.

and by her became the father of Segub, who was the father of Jair. If now Jair would make out his legal claim to the inheritance in Gilead he would show how he was a descendant of Machir, the son of Manasseh; but if his paternal lineage were inquired after, it would be as easily traceable to Hezron, the son of Judah.

Considerations of this kind will go far to solve the difficulties which have so greatly perplexed critics in the two diverse genealogies of Jesus, as given in Matt. i, 1–17, and Luke iii, 23–38. At this late day the particular facts are wanting which would put in clear light the discrepancies of these lists of our Lord's ancestry, and can only be supplied by such reasons and probable suppositions as are warranted by a careful collation of genealogies, and well-known facts of Jewish custom in reckoning legal succession and lineal descent. The hypothesis, quite prevalent and popular since the time of the Reformation, that Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph, and Luke that of Mary, is justly set aside by a majority of the best critics as incompatible with the words of both evangelists, who alike claim to give the genealogy of Joseph.[1] The right to "the throne of David his father" (Luke i, 32) must, according to all Jewish precedent, ideas, and usage, be based upon *a legal ground of succession*, as of an inheritance; and therefore his genealogy must be traced backward from Joseph the legal husband of Mary. And it is clear, outside of these genealogies, that Joseph was of the royal house of David. Thus, the angel addressed him: "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary thy wife" (Matt. i, 20). He went to Bethlehem, the city of David, to enroll himself with Mary, "because he was of the house and family of David" (Luke ii, 45). It is, however, not at all improbable that Mary also was of the house and family of David,[2] a near relative — cousin perhaps — of Joseph, and thus the natural succession of Jesus to the throne of David would, according

The two diverse genealogies of Jesus.

[1] Many critics read Luke iii, 23, as if it implied that Mary's rather than Joseph's genealogy is given. Thus: *ὢν υἱός, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, Ἰωσήφ, τοῦ Ἡλεί*: "Being the son, as was supposed, of Joseph (but in fact of Mary), of Eli," etc. This, however, is manifestly interpolating a most important statement into the words of the evangelist, a statement too important for him to have omitted had he intended such a thought. See Meyer, in loco.

[2] Fairbairn observes that the marriage of cousins "perfectly accords with Jewish practice. . . . It was the constant aim of the Jews to make inheritance and blood-relationship, as far as possible, go together."—Hermeneutical Manual, p. 222. Upham similarly remarks: "Royal blood intermarries with royal blood. When Victoria was betrothed to Albert every one knew that Albert was a prince, and every one would know that the betrothed of a Czarowitz, or of a Prince of Wales, was a princess. The family of King David, obscure people for centuries, must have married below their rank, or have intermarried among themselves. That they did the latter is so

to Jewish ideas, be most remarkably complete. Certain it is that our Lord's descent from David was never questioned in the earliest times. He allowed himself to be called the Son of David (Matt. ix, 27; xv, 22), and no one of his adversaries denied this important claim. He was "of the seed of David," according to Paul's Gospel (2 Tim. ii, 8; comp. Rom. i, 3; Acts xiii, 22, 23), and the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "It is evident (*πρόδηλον, conspicuously manifest*) that our Lord has sprung from Judah" (Heb. vii, 14).

Jerome and Africanus on the Lord's genealogy.

The Emperor Julian attacked these genealogies on the ground of their discrepancies, and Jerome, in replying to him, observes that if Julian had been more familiar with Jewish modes of speech he might have seen that one evangelist gives the *natural* and the other the *legal* pedigree of Joseph.[1] Essentially the same method of reconciling these discrepancies was advanced long previously by Africanus, who writes as follows: "It was customary in Israel to calculate the names of the generations either according to nature or according to the law; according to nature by the succession of legitimate offspring; according to law when another raised children to the name of a brother who had died childless. For as the hope of a resurrection was not yet clearly given, they imitated the promise which was to take place by a kind of mortal resurrection, with a view to perpetuate the name of the person who had died. Since then there are some of those who are inserted in this genealogical table that succeed each other in the natural order of father and son, some again that were born of others and were ascribed to others by name, both the real and reputed fathers have been recorded. Thus neither of the Gospels has made a false statement, whether calculating in the order of nature or according to law. For the families descended from Solomon, and those from Nathan, were so intermingled by substitutions in the place of those who had died childless, by second marriages, and the raising up of seed, that the same persons are justly considered as in one respect belonging to one of these, and in another respect belonging to others. Hence it is that, both of these accounts being true, they come down to Joseph, with considerable intricacy, it is true, but with great accuracy."[2]

probable, from the tendency of Jewish families to keep together, and from the usage of royal families, that it may be held for certain that when St. Matthew stated that Joseph, a prince of the house of David, married Mary, he plainly told his countrymen (and, if he thought of others, he thought that through them all would know) that the betrothed of this prince was a princess of the house of David."—Thoughts on the Holy Gospels, p. 204.

[1] Jerome on Matt. i.

[2] Quoted by Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. (Bohn's ed.), book i, chap. vii.

These general considerations furnish the basis on which several different methods of harmonizing the genealogies are possible. In the absence of certain information no hypothesis can well claim absolute certainty. The theory of Africanus is that Jacob and Heli were brothers by the same mother. Heli died childless, and Jacob married his widow, and by her begat Joseph, the husband of Mary (Matt. i, 16), and yet, according to levirate law, Joseph was also of Heli (Luke iii, 23).[1] According to this theory Matthew records the natural, and Luke the legal, line of descent. Grotius, on the other hand, maintains that Matthew's table gives the legal succession, inasmuch as he recounts those who obtained the kingdom (which was the right of the first-born) without the admixture of a private name.[2] He observes further that, according to Matt. i, 12, Jechonias begat Salathiel, but according to Luke iii, 27, Salathiel was the son of Neri. Now, according to Jer. xxii, 30 (comp. xxxvi, 30), Jechonias was sentenced to become childless. In that case the right to the throne of David would devolve upon the next nearest heir, which was probably Salathiel, the son of Neri, whose direct lineage Luke traces up to Nathan, another son of David (Luke iii, 27–31). This theory is most fully developed by Hervey, who maintains "that Salathiel, of the house of Nathan, became heir to David's throne on the failure of Solomon's line in Jechonias, and that as such he and his descendants were transferred as 'sons of Jeconiah' to the royal genealogical table, according to the principle of the Jewish law laid down in Num. xxvii, 8–11. The two genealogies then coincide for two, or rather four, generations [Salathiel, Zorobabel (= Rhesa), Joana (= Hananiah, 1 Chron. iii, 19), Juda (= Abiud of Matt. i, 13, and Hodaiah of 1 Chron. iii, 24)]. There then occur six names in Matthew which are not found in Luke; and then once more the two genealogies coincide in the name of Matthan, or Matthat (Matt. i, 15; Luke iii, 24), to whom two different sons, Jacob and Heli, are assigned, but one and the same grandson and heir, Joseph, the husband of Mary. The simple and obvious explanation of this is, on the same principle as before, that Joseph was descended from Joseph, a younger son of Abiud (the Juda of Luke iii, 26), but that on the failure of the line of Abiud's eldest son in Eleazar (Matt. i, 15), Joseph's grandfather, Matthan, became the heir; that Matthan had two sons, Jacob and Heli; that Jacob had no son, and consequently that Joseph, the son of his younger brother Heli, became heir to his uncle, and to the throne of David. . . . Mary, the

No hypothesis should claim absolute certainty.

[1] Eusebius, Eccl. Hist., book i, chap. vii.

[2] See his Annotations on Matt. i, 16, and Poole, Synopsis Criticorum, in loco.

mother of Jesus, was, in all probability, the daughter of Jacob, and first cousin to Joseph, her husband. So that in point of *fact*, though not of *form*, both the genealogies are as much hers as her husband's."[1]

Genealogies not useless.

The biblical genealogies may appear to the modern reader like a useless part of Scripture, and lists of places, many of them now utterly unknown, like that of Israel's places of encampment (Num. xxxiii), and the cities allotted to the different tribes (e. g., Josh. xv, 20–62), have been pronounced by sceptics as incompatible with lofty ideas of a written revelation of God. But such notions spring from a stilted and mechanical conception of what the revelation ought to be. These apparently dry and tiresome lists of names are among the most irrefragable evidences of the historical verity of the Scripture records. If to our modern thought they seem of no practical worth, we should not forget that to the ancient Hebrew they were of the first importance as documents of ancestral history and legal rights. The most uncritical and absurd of all sceptical fancies would be the notion that these lists have been fabricated for a purpose. One might as well maintain that the fossil remains of extinct animals have been set in the rocks for the purpose of deception. The superficial utilitarian may indeed pronounce both the fossils and the genealogies alike worthless; but the profounder student of the earth and of man will recognise in them invaluable indexes of history. These genealogies are like the rough stones in the lower foundation of a building. Some of the stones are out of sight in the subsoil; others have become nicked and bruised, and some displaced and lost in the lapse of centuries, but they were all in some way essential to the origin, rise, stability, and usefulness of the noble superstructure.

[1] A. C. Hervey, article on Genealogy of Jesus Christ in Smith's Bible Dictionary. For fuller details and discussion of the same theory see the same author's volume entitled Genealogies of our Lord (Cambridge, 1853). Dr. Holmes attempts (article Gen. of Jesus Christ in Kitto's New Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature) to controvert Hervey's positions and arguments, but we think entirely without success. The same may be said of Meyer's note at the end of Luke iii. The fact is that while no one should affirm that Hervey's hypothesis is perfectly certain (for in the absence of sufficient data no theory is entitled to such a claim) no one can prove that it is not correct. All that can well be asked for in the case is a hypothesis which will exhibit how both genealogies may be true, and that which holds Matthew's to be the legal (royal) line and Luke's the natural seems on the whole to be most entitled to credit. On the minor discrepancies and difficulties of these genealogies see the works named above, the several Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and W. H. Mill's discussion of the genealogies in his Observations on the attempted Application of Pantheistic Principles to the Theory and Historical Criticism of the Gospel. Cambridge, 2d edition, 1855.

The greater number of the numerical discrepancies of the Bible are probably due to the mistakes of copyists. The ancient custom of using letters for numbers, and the great similarity of some of the letters, will account for such differences as that of 2 Sam. viii, 4, compared with 1 Chron. xviii, 4, where final Nun (ן), which stands for 700, might easily be confounded with Zayin with two dots over it (ז̈) which was used to denote 7000. According to 1 Kings vii, 15, the two brazen pillars were each eighteen cubits high; in 2 Chron. iii, 15, it is written: "He made before the house two pillars thirty and five cubits long." Some have thought that, as in Kings, the *height* (קוֹמָה) of each pillar is given, and in Chronicles the *length* (אֹרֶךְ) of the two pillars, we should understand the latter passage as giving the length of the two pillars together. They may have been cast in one piece, and afterward cut into two pillars, each being, in round numbers, eighteen cubits. The more probable supposition, however, is that the discrepancy arose by confounding יח = 18, with לה = 35. Numerical discrepancies.

The two lists of exiles who returned with Zerubbabel (Ezra ii, 1–70, and Neh. vii, 6–73) exhibit numerous discrepancies as well as many coincidences, and it is remarkable that the numbers in Ezra's list amount to 29,818, and in Nehemiah's to 31,089, and yet, according to both lists, the entire congregation numbered 42,360 (Ezra ii, 64; Neh. vii, 66). The probability is that neither list is intended as a perfect enumeration of all the families that returned from exile, but only of such families of Judah and Benjamin as could show an authentic genealogy of their father's house, while the 42,360 includes many persons and families belonging to other tribes who in their exile had lost all certain record of their genealogy, but were nevertheless true descendants of some of the ancient tribes. It is also noticeable that Ezra's list mentions 494 persons not recognised in Nehemiah's list, and Nehemiah's list mentions 1,765 not recognised in Ezra's; but if we add the surplus of Ezra to the sum of Nehemiah (494 + 31,089 = 31,583) we have the same result as by adding Nehemiah's surplus to the sum of Ezra's numbers (1,765 + 29,818 = 31,583). Hence it may be reasonably believed that 31,583 was the sum of all that could show their father's house; that the two lists were drawn up independently of each other; and that both are defective, though one supplies the defects of the other. Lists of returning exiles in Ezra and Nehemiah.

As an instance of doctrinal and ethical inconsistency between the Old and New Testaments we may cite the Hebrew law of retaliation as treated by our Lord. In Exod. xxi, 23–25, it is commanded that in cases of assault and Doctrinal and ethical discrepancies.

strife resulting in the injury of persons, "thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (comp. Lev. xxiv, 20; Deut. xix, 21). But Jesus says: "Do not resist the evil man; but whosoever smites thee upon thy right cheek turn to him the other also" (Matt. v, 39). A proper explanation of these contradictory Scriptures will also answer for many other passages of like spirit and import. The true explanation is to be had by a careful consideration of the historical standpoint of each speaker, and the particular end or purpose which each had in view. We are not to assume that the Mosaic legislation was without divine sanction, and that by the words "it was said to the ancients" (Matt. v, 21) Jesus meant to cast a reflection on the source or authority of the old law, as if to set himself against Moses. What was said to them of old was well said, but it needed modifying at a later age and under a new dispensation. Moreover, Moses was legislating for a peculiar nation at a distinctive crisis, and enunciating the rights and methods of a civil jurisprudence. The old law of retaliation was grounded essentially in truth and justice. In the maintenance of law and order in any body politic personal assault and wilful wrong demand penal satisfaction, and this self-evident truth the Gospel does not ignore or set aside. It recognises the civil magistrate as a minister of God ordained to punish the evildoer (Rom. xiii, 1–5; 1 Peter ii, 14). But in the sermon on the mount Jesus is urging the principle of Christian tenderness and love as it should prevail in the personal intercourse of men as individuals. The great principle of Christian action should be: Let not bitterness and hatred toward any man possess your soul. The spirit of law, national honour, and right logically led to the general motto, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy" (Matt. v, 43). Jesus would bring about a better age, a kindlier feeling among men, a higher and nobler civilization. To effect this he issues a new commandment designed, first of all, to operate in a man's private relations with his fellow man: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you" (Matt. v, 44). Here our Lord is evidently not putting forth a maxim or method of civil jurisprudence, but a principle of individual conduct. He shows us, as Alford observes, "the condition to which a Christian community should *tend*, and to further which every private Christian's own endeavours should be directed. It is quite beside the purpose for the world to say that these precepts of our Lord are too highly pitched for humanity, and so to find an excuse for violating them. If we were disciples of his in the true sense,

Supposed conflict between the Law and the Gospel.

these precepts would, in their spirit, as indicative of frames of mind, be strictly observed; and, as far as we are disciples, we shall attain to such observance." [1]

Civil rights maintained by Jesus and Paul.

That Jesus, by these precepts of personal conduct in the ordinary affairs of life, did not intend to forbid the censure and punishment of evildoers, is evident from his own conduct. When struck by one of the officers in the presence of the high priest, our Lord remonstrated against the flagrant abuse (John xviii, 22, 23). When Paul was similarly smitten by command of the high priest (Acts xxiii, 3), the apostle indignantly cried out: "God will smite thee, thou whited wall!" The same apostle sets forth the true Christian doctrine on all these points in Rom. xii, 18–xiii, 6: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, be at peace with all men." Here he more than intimates the improbability of being at peace with all, and then, assuming that one suffers personal assault and injury, he adds: "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath" (of God). That is, let the divine wrath take its own course, and do not attempt to anticipate it, or stand in its way by retaliation and personal revenge. And then he quotes from the old law (Deut. xxxii, 35) where "it is written, To me belongeth vengeance; I will recompense, saith the Lord." God will bring his wrath (ὀργῇ) to bear upon the offender in due time, and will requite the wrong. And then follows another quotation from the Old Testament (Prov. xxv, 21, 22): "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for by doing this thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head." Thereupon he sums up the whole thought by saying: "Be not overcome by the evil (which has been committed against thee), but overcome the evil in the good" (in the element and life of that all-conquering goodness which will be exhibited by this course of conduct). But so far is the apostle from teaching that crimes and offences are never to be avenged that he proceeds immediately to show that God has ordained the civil power as an agency and instrument for this very end. Is it asked what course the wrath of God takes when he recompenses vengeance upon evildoers? Doubtless his methods of judgment are manifold, but the apostle shows us, in the immediate context, one of the established methods by which God has arranged to punish the impious offender, namely, through "the higher powers" (Rom. xiii, 1). Rulers are designed to be a terror to evildoers. The civil magistrate "does not vainly bear the sword; for he is God's minister, an avenger for wrath (ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργην, a divinely ordained avenging agent for the purpose of

[1] Greek Testament on Matt. v, 38.

executing the wrath, ἡ ὀργή, mentioned above in xii, 19) to him that doeth the evil" (Rom. xiii, 4). Let no man, therefore, presume to say that the spirit and precepts of the New Testament are at war with those of the Old. In both Testaments the principles of brotherly love and of doing good for evil are inculcated, as well as the duty of maintaining human rights and civil order.

The avenging of blood.

Some persons have strangely assumed that the prohibition of murder (Exod. xx, 13) in the Decalogue is inconsistent with the taking of human life in any form. This fallacy arises from a failure to distinguish between individual relations and the demands of public and administrative justice. The right and justice of capital punishment are affirmed in the most ancient legislation (Gen. ix, 6). The law of Moses, which makes so prominent the prohibition of murder, forbids the taking of any satisfaction for the life of a murderer. He that wickedly takes the life of a man must pay the penalty with his own life, or the very land will be defiled (Num. xxxv, 31–34). Ancient law and custom, recognized in the books of Moses, gave the nearest kinsman of the murdered man the right of avenging this crime. The practice, however, was liable to grave abuses, and Moses took measures to restrict them by providing cities of refuge. But the necessity of punishing the guilty criminal is everywhere recognised, and the Gospel of Jesus nowhere assumes to set it aside. The methods of penalty may change in the course of ages, and sins which called for capital punishment among the ancient Hebrews may demand no such severity of treatment under the Gospel dispensation. But it may be gravely doubted whether the "higher powers" can bear the sword to any excellent purpose if they be denied the right to recompense the crime of murder with capital punishment.[1]

Difference between Paul and James on Justification.

A prominent example of supposed inconsistency of doctrine in the New Testament is found in the different methods of presenting the subject of justification in the epistles of Paul and of James. Paul's teaching is thus expressed in Gal. ii, 15, 16: "We Jews by nature, and not sinners from the

[1] Meyer observes that Rom. xiii, 4, compared with Acts xxv, 11, "proves that the abolition of the *right* of capital punishment deprives the magistracy of a power which is not merely given to it in the Old Testament, but is also decisively confirmed in the New Testament, and which it (herein lies the sacred limitation and responsibility of this power) possesses as God's minister; on which account its application is to be upheld as a principle with reference to those cases in law, where the actual satisfaction of the divine Nemesis absolutely demands it, while, at the same time, the right of pardon is still to be kept open for all concrete cases. The character of being unchristian, of barbarism, etc., does not adhere to the *right itself*, but to its *abuse* in legislation and practice."—Critical Commentary on Rom. xiii, 4.

Gentiles, but knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, *from works of law*, i. e., as a source of merit, ground of procedure in the given case, and so the reason and cause of the justification) save through faith of Jesus Christ, even we believed in (εἰς, *into*, in allusion to the definite fact of *entering into* vital union with Christ at conversion) Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith of Christ, and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified." Substantially the same statement is made in Rom. iii, 20, 28, and in Rom. iv the doctrine is illustrated by the case of Abraham, who "believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness" (ver. 3). On the other hand James insists on being "doers of the word" (Jas. i, 22–25). He extols practical godliness, the fulfilling of "the royal law according to the Scripture" (ii, 8), and declares that "faith, if it have not works, is dead by itself" (ii, 17). He also illustrates by the case of Abraham "when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar," and argues "that the faith wrought with his works, and by the works the faith was perfected, and the Scripture was fulfilled which says: Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness, and he was called God's Friend. Ye see," he concludes, "that by works (ἐξ ἔργων) a man is justified, and not by faith only" (ii, 21–24).

Method of solution.

The solution of this apparent opposition is to be had by a study of the personal religious experience of each writer, and their different modes of thought and fields of operation in the early Christian Church. We must also observe the peculiar sense in which each one uses the terms *faith*, *works*, and *justification*, for these words have each been used in all periods of the Church to express a number of quite distinct though kindred ideas.

Different personal experiences of Paul and James.

We should first remember that Paul was led to Christ by a sudden and marvellous conversion. The conviction of sin, the smitings of soul when he found that he had been persecuting the Lord Jesus, the falling of the scales from his eyes, and his consequent keen and vivid perception of the free grace of the Gospel realized through faith in Christ Jesus—all this would necessarily enter into his ideal of the justification of a sinner. He sees that neither Jew nor Gentile can enter into saving relations with Christ except through such a faith. Then his mission and ministry led him pre-eminently to combat legal Judaism, and he became "the apostle of the Gentiles." James, on the other hand, had been more gradually indoctrinated in Gospel life. His conception of Christianity was that of the consummation and perfection of the old covenant. His mission and ministry led him

mainly, if not altogether, to labour among those of the circumcision (Gal. ii, 9). He was wont to view all Christian doctrine in the light of Old Testament Scripture, which thereby became to him "the implanted word" (i, 21), "a perfect law, the (law) of liberty" (ver. 25), "a royal law" (ii, 8). And we must also bear in mind, as Neander observes, "that James in his peculiar position had not, like Paul, to vindicate an independent and unshackled ministration of the Gospel among the Gentiles in opposition to the pretensions of Jewish legal righteousness; but that he felt himself compelled to press the practical consequences and requirements of the Christian faith on those in whom that faith had been blended with the errors of carnal Judaism, and to tear away the supports of their false confidence."[1]

Different modes of apprehending and expressing great truths.

Such different experiences and fields of action would naturally develop in these ministers of Jesus Christ correspondingly different styles of thought and teaching. But when, with these facts in view, we analyze their respective teachings, we find nothing that is really contradictory. They simply set before us different aspects of the same great truths of God. Paul's teaching in the passages quoted above has reference to *faith* in its first operation; the confidence with which a sinner, conscious of guilt and condemnation, throws himself upon the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, and thus obtains pardon and peace with God. James, on the other hand, treats of faith rather as the abiding principle of a godly life, with works of piety flowing from it as waters from a living spring. Paul cites the case of Abraham while he is yet in uncircumcision, and before he had received that seal of the righteousness of faith (Rom. iv, 10, 11); but James reverts to the later time when he offered up Isaac, and by that act of fidelity to God's word had his faith perfected (Jas. ii, 21). The term *works* is also used with different shades of meaning. Paul has in mind the *works of the law* with reference to the idea of a legal righteousness; James evidently has in view works of practical piety, like visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction (i, 27), and ministering to the wants of the needy (ii, 15, 16). Justification, accordingly, is viewed by Paul as a judicial act involving the remission of sins, reconciliation with God, and restoration to the divine favour; but with James it is rather the maintenance of such a state of favour with God, a continued approval in the sight of God and man. All this will appear the more clearly when we note that James addresses his Jewish brethren of the dispersion, who

[1] Planting and Training of the Christian Church. English Translation, by Ryland, p. 499. New York, 1865.

were exposed to divers temptations and trials (i, 1–4), and were in danger of reposing in a dead antinomian Pharisaism; but Paul is discussing, as a learned theologian, the doctrine of salvation, as it originates in the counsels of God, and is developed in the history of God's dealings with the whole race of Adam.

Moreover, it should be observed that James does not deny the necessity and efficacy of faith, nor does Paul ignore the importance of good works. What James opposes is the mischievous doctrine of faith apart from works. He condemns the man who says he has faith, and yet exhibits a life and conduct inconsistent with the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such faith, he declares, is dead in itself (ii, 14–17). Justification is by faith, but not by faith only (ver. 24). It evidences itself by works of piety and love. Paul, on the other hand, opposes the idea of a legal righteousness. He condemns the vain conceit that a man can merit God's favour by a perfect keeping of law, and shows that the law serves its highest purpose when it discloses to a man "the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii, 20) and makes sin itself appear "exceedingly sinful" (vii, 7–13). But Paul is as far from denying the necessity of good works as evidences of a believer's faith in Christ, as James is from denying the necessity of faith in Christ in order to obtain the remission of sin. In Gal. v, 6, he speaks of "faith working through love," and in 1 Cor. xiii, 2, he affirms that though one have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, he is nothing. Evidently both these apostles are in harmony with Jesus, who comprehends the essential relations of faith and works when he says: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by its fruit" (Matt. xii, 33).

Different aim of Paul and James.

These differences between Paul and James illustrate the individual freedom of the sacred writers in their enunciation of divine truth. Each maintains his own peculiarities of thought and style. Each receives and communicates his word of revelation and knowledge of the mystery of Christ according to the conditions of life, experience, and action under which he has been trained. All these facts are to be taken into consideration when we compare and contrast the teachings of Scripture which are apparently diverse. It will be found that these variations constitute one manifold and self-evidencing revelation of the only true God.

Individual freedom of different writers.

The general principles of exegesis set forth above will suffice for the explanation of all other doctrinal and ethical inconsistencies which have been alleged as existing in the Bible. Strict regard to

the standpoint of the speaker or writer, the occasion, scope, and plan, together with a critical analysis of the details, will usually show that there exists no real contradiction. But when men bring forward hyperbolical expressions peculiar to oriental speech, or instances of Hebraic anthropomorphism, and press them into an assumed literal significance, they simply create the difficulties over which they stumble. Doctrinal and ethical inconsistencies, developed by such a process, are all dissipated by attention to the nature of the scriptural language and a rational interpretation of the same.

Value of biblical discrepancies.

Mr. Haley, in his comprehensive and valuable work on the Discrepancies of the Bible,[1] observes that these discrepancies are not without a value. They may well be believed to contemplate the following ends: (1) They stimulate intellectual effort, awaken curiosity and inquiry, and thus lead to a closer and more extensive study of the sacred volume. (2) They illustrate the analogy between the Bible and nature. As the earth and heavens exhibit marvellous harmony in the midst of great variety and discord, so in the Scriptures there exists a notable harmony behind all the seeming discrepancies. (3) They prove that there was no collusion among the sacred writers, for their differences are such as would never have been introduced by their design.[2] (4) They also show the value of the spirit as above the letter of the word of God, and (5) serve as a test of moral character. To the captious spirit, predisposed to find and magnify difficulties in the divine revelation, the biblical discrepancies will be great stumblingblocks, and occasions of disobedience and cavil. But to the serious inquirer, who desires to "know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xiii, 11), a faithful study of these discrepancies will disclose hidden harmonies and undesigned coincidences which will convince him that these multiform Scriptures are truly the word of God.

[1] An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible, pp. 30–40. Andover, 1874.

[2] "These discrepancies," observes Wordsworth, "being such as they are found to be, are of inestimable value. They show that there has been no collusion among our witnesses, and that our manuscript copies of the Gospels, about five hundred in number, and brought to us from all parts of the world, have not been mutilated or interpolated with any sinister design; they have not been tampered with by any religious sect for the sake of propagating any private opinion as the word of God. These discrepancies are, in fact, evidences of the purity and integrity of the sacred text."—The New Testament in the original Greek, with Notes and Introductions. Preface to the Four Gospels, p xxii. Lond., 1859.

CHAPTER XXII.

HARMONY AND DIVERSITY OF THE GOSPELS.

THE life of Jesus forms a turningpoint in the history of the world. The Old Testament Scriptures show the steady trend of history toward that eventful epoch. The prophets with one voice place the coming of the Christ "in the end of the days" (Gen. xlix, 1; Num. xxiv, 14; Isa. ii, 2; Dan. x, 14), and conceive his advent and reign as the ushering in of a new age. The God of the prophets spoke, in the last days of the old æon, in the person of his incarnate Son, "whom he made heir of all things, through whom also he made the ages" (*τοὺς αἰῶνας*, *the æons*, Heb. i, 2). The death and consequent exaltation of Jesus were the crucial hour of the world's history (John xii, 23–33), and from that hour there was a new departure in the course of human affairs. After the Gospel of the Messianic kingdom had been preached in the whole Roman world, for a witness to all the nations of the same (Matt. xxiv, 14), the end of that age came. For it was necessary, before the old economy came to its decisive end, that the new Gospel should first obtain a sure standing in the world. The utter overthrow of the Jewish polity and state, and the awful ruin of that wicked city where the Lord was crucified, marked the consummation of that æon. And from that point onward the triumphs of the cross extend. It is but natural, therefore, that the four gospels, being the authoritative records of the life and words of the Lord Jesus, are esteemed the most precious documents of Christianity.

The life of Jesus a turningpoint in human history.

Each of the four gospels presents us with a life picture of the Lord Jesus, and assumes to tell what he did and what he said. But while narrating many things in common, these four witnesses differ much from one another. How to account for so many differences in the midst of so many coincidences has always been a perplexing study among expositors. In modern times the rationalistic critics have pointed to the apparent discrepancies of the gospels as evidences against their credibility, and these most cherished records of the Church have become the central point of controversy between faith and unbelief. The rationalists all concede that the man Jesus lived and died, but that he rose again from the dead, according to the gospels,

The Gospels the chief ground of conflict between faith and unbelief.

they stoutly deny, and resort to all manner of conjectures to account for the uniform and universal faith of the Church in his resurrection. The common sense of all Christendom logically concludes that if Jesus Christ arose from the dead that miracle at once confirms the credibility of the gospels, and accounts for the marvellous rise, the excellency and present power, of the Christian religion. It proves that its origin was supernatural and divine. But if the miracle of Christ's resurrection be a falsehood, the entire Christian system, which rests upon it, is a stupendous fraud. Well might Paul write: "If Christ has not been raised, vain then is our preaching, vain also your faith, and we are found even false witnesses of God, because we witnessed respecting God that he raised up the Christ" (1 Cor. xv, 14, 15).

Attempts at constructing Gospel Harmonies.

Many writers, ancient and modern, have undertaken to construct a (so-called) Harmony of the Gospels.[1] They have adopted various methods of explaining the several discrepancies, and of constructing one harmonious narrative out of the four different accounts of the life of Christ. Eusebius compiled an arrangement of the gospels in ten canons or tables, according as the different events are related by one or more of the evangelists. Thus, under one head he brought those passages that are common to all the gospels; under another those that are found only in one gospel; in three other tables he exhibited those facts which are common to any three of the gospels, and in five others those that are common to any two. At a later period effort was directed more to the combining of the four gospels into one chronological order, and then the great question arose, Which of the evangelists gives us the true order of events? Some maintained that all four gospels give the events of the Lord's life in their true chronological order, and wherever the events are arranged differently by different writers we should understand that the transactions in question occurred more than once. Others strenuously maintained that chronological order is not observed by any of the evangelists, while others were uncertain which particular evangelist is the best chronological guide, some preferring Matthew's arrangement, others Luke's, inasmuch as he professes to set forth things in their true order (καθεξῆς, Luke i, 3). Cartwright follows the arrangement of Mark,

[1] The most valuable works on the Harmony of the Gospels are those of J. Macknight (London, 1756), W. Newcome, in Greek (Dublin, 1778), and English (1802), G. Townsend (London, 1825), edited by T. W. Coit (Boston, 1837), E. Robinson, in Greek (Boston, 1845), and English (1846), J. Strong, in English (New York, 1852), and Greek (1854), W. Stroud, in Greek (London, 1853), Tischendorf, Synopsis Evangelica (New edition, Leipsic, 1864), F. Gardiner, in Greek and English (Andover, 1871).

and John's Gospel, having comparatively few things in common with the others, is generally believed to present the true chronological order of the matters it records.

The harmonists have furnished many valuable expositions, together with many solutions of the alleged discrepancies of the gospels. But as far as they have attempted to combine the four gospels into one continuous narrative, and settle positively the exact chronological order of events, they have rather hindered than helped a satisfactory understanding of these priceless records. Such a process brings these lifelike and independent narratives to a test they were never meant to meet, and assumes a standard of judgment that is both unscientific and unfair. But most of the later harmonists concede that it was no purpose of the evangelists to compose a complete account of the life and works of Jesus, and that all of them record some things without strict regard to the order of time. "The true use of harmonies," says J. A. Alexander, "is threefold: exegetical, historical, and apologetical. By mere juxtaposition, if judicious, the gospels may be made to throw light upon each other's obscure places. By combination—not mechanical, but rational; not textual, but interpretative—harmonies put it in our power not to grind, or melt, or boil four gospels into one, but out of the four, kept apart, yet viewed together, to extract one history for ourselves. And, lastly, by the endless demonstration of the possible solutions of apparent or alleged discrepancies, even where we may not be prepared to choose among them, they reduce the general charge of falsehood or of contradiction, not only *ad absurdum*, but to a palpable impossibility. How *can* four independent narratives be false or contradictory which it is possible to reconcile on so many distinct hypotheses? The art of the most subtle infidelity consists in hiding this convincing argument behind the alleged necessity of either giving a conclusive and exclusive answer to all captious cavils and apparent disagreements, or abandoning our faith in the history as a whole. This most important end of gospel harmonies has been accomplished." [1]

Use of Harmonies.

An intelligent and profitable study of the gospels requires attention especially to three things: (1) Their origin; (2) The distinct plan and purpose of each gospel, and (3) The marked characteristics of the several gospels. These considerations, leading as they do to a proper understanding of the gospel records, and to the solution of their discrepancies, are really so many hermeneutical principles to be applied in any thorough exposition of these records.

Three considerations.

[1] Article on Harmonies of the Gospels in the Princeton Review, vol. xxviii, p. 105.

Origin of the Gospels.

The most cursory examination of the four gospels must show the observant critic that they are not, in any proper sense, formal histories. Nor do they assume to be complete biographies. There is, really, nothing like them in the whole range of literature. They manifestly sprung from a common source, and they all agree in recording more or less of the life, words, works, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But whether that common source were written documents or oral traditions has long been a matter of controversy. Some have maintained the existence of an original gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic; others an original gospel in Greek; while others have supposed the earlier written gospel was supplemented by apostolical traditions.[1] But the hypothesis of an oral gospel, embodying the substance of the apostolic preaching, is now very generally held as the principal source of our four gospels. "The hypothesis of an oral gospel," says Westcott, "is most consistent with the general habit of the Jews and the peculiar habit of the apostles; it is supported by the earliest direct testimony, and in some degree implied in the apostolic writings. The result of the examination of the internal character of the gospels is not less favourable to its adoption than the weight of external evidence. The general form of the Gospels points to an oral source. A minute biography, or a series of annals, which are the simplest and most natural forms of writing, are the least natural forms of tradition, and the farthest removed from the evangelical narratives, which consist of striking scenes and discourses, such as must have lived long in the memories of those who witnessed them. Nor are the gospels fashioned only on an oral type; they are fashioned also upon that type which is preserved in the other apostolic writings. The oral gospel, as far as it can be traced in the Acts and the Epistles, centered in the crowning facts of the passion and the resurrection, while the earlier ministry of the Lord was regarded chiefly in relation to its final issue. In a narrative composed on such a plan it is evident that the record of the last stage of Christ's work would be conspicuous for detail and fulness, and that the events chosen to represent the salient features of its earlier course would be combined together without special reference to date or even to sequence. Viewed in the light of its end the whole period was one in essence, undivided

An original oral Gospel.

[1] For an account of the various theories of the origin of the gospels, see Introductions to the New Testament by Eichhorn, De Wette, Bleek, Davidson, etc., and Marsh's Translation of Michaelis' Introduction to the New Testament, Westcott's Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, pp. 174–216, and the biblical dictionaries and cyclopædias under the word Gospels.

by years or festivals, and the record would be marked not so much by divisions of time as by groups of events. In all these respects the synoptic gospels exactly represent the probable form of the first oral gospel. They seem to have been shaped by the pressure of recurring needs, and not by the deliberate forethought of their authors. In their common features they seem to be that which the earliest history declares they are, the summary of the apostolic preaching, the historic groundwork of the Church."[1]

No absolute certainty as to the particular origin of each Gospel.

But granting the earliest form of the gospel narrative to have been oral, that concession is far from determining the particular origin of our present gospels. And it ought to be agreed among discerning critics that, from the nature of the case, in the absence of sufficient evidence, no absolute certainty can be attained. How and when Matthew and Mark wrote, what was the special occasion of their writing, how far they may have used written documents, and what understanding the apostles and evangelists may have had among themselves about writing down the words and works of their Lord, are all questions which admit of no positive answer. It is not the province of a work on hermeneutics to discuss the different theories of the origin of the written gospels, but to define principles of procedure essential to any profitable discussion of the subject. And it is all important to bear in mind that where absolute certainty on a given question is impossible, dogmatic assumptions must be avoided, and considerate attention should be bestowed upon any reasonable suppositions which will help to elucidate the problem. In the absence of external testimony the gospels themselves, and other New Testament books, may be expected to suggest the best indications of the origin and aim of any one of the gospels. It appears that it was regarded as an essential qualification for apostleship to have seen the Lord (Acts i, 21, 22; 1 Cor. ix, 1). And is it not every way reasonable to suppose that the apostles had an understanding among themselves as to what principal facts of the Lord's life should be embodied in their preaching? May it not have been agreed among them that Matthew and John should each write a gospel of the Lord? At one time it was agreed, according to Paul (Gal. ii, 9), that James, Peter, and John should go as apostles to the Jews, and Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles. The council of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, described in Acts xv, shows how carefully matters of general interest to the Church were discussed by the great leaders. Is it likely, then, that so important a matter as the publication of authoritative

Probable suppositions as to their origin.

[1] Introduction to the Gospels, pp. 212, 213, Boston, 1862.

accounts of the Christ would have been neglected by them? There was a saying abroad in the Church that John should not die (John xxi, 23). Whatever its precise meaning, it may have been the occasion of his putting off the composition of his gospel until all the rest of the apostles had passed away. The ancient tradition that Mark's Gospel is essentially that of Peter, and Luke's essentially that of Paul, is corroborated by their general character and form. With those who accept the apostolic origin and divine inspiration of the four gospels there is no reasonable ground for denying that these records were put forth by a common understanding of the apostles and elders of the Church, and for the purpose of providing the churches everywhere with an authoritative testimony of the life and works of the Lord Jesus. It appears from Luke's preface (Luke i, 1) that many persons took in hand, at an early day, to publish narratives of the current oral gospel, namely, the things that were looked upon as fully accomplished by God in the person of Jesus, and before the eyes of those who were with him from the first. This fact probably made it expedient that the great events of that gospel should be set forth by apostolic authority, and when at length these four authoritative records went forth to the churches they supplanted all others, and have ever commended themselves to the faith of Christian believers in all lands.

Distinct plan and purpose of each Gospel.

Further suggestions as to the origin of the four gospels will appear as we proceed to inquire into the distinct plan and purpose of each. Is it reasonable to suppose that these gospel records were composed and sent forth among the early churches without any definite plan and purpose? Are they merely so many collections of fragmentary traditions thrown together haphazard? When an event recorded by one is omitted by another, are we to suppose that the omission arose from ignorance of the event? To suppose the affirmative of any one of these questions would seem highly absurd, for each of the four gospels contains so many evidences of definite design, and so many inimitable word-pictures, that we cannot believe that any authors, competent for the writing of such books, would have put them forth without orderly arrangement and without special purpose. It is far more probable that each evangelist had a reason for what he omitted as well as for what he recorded.

Tradition of the early Church.

Irenæus gives the following account of the gospels: "Matthew issued a written gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundation of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand

down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel preached by him. Afterward, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon his breast, did himself publish a gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia."[1] With this general statement of Irenæus all ancient history and tradition substantially agree.

A cursory examination of Matthew's Gospel will discover its special adaptation to Jewish readers. The first verse, in true Jewish style, declares it to be "The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." The great purpose of this gospel throughout is to exhibit Jesus as the Messiah of whom the prophets had spoken, the divine founder of the kingdom of God. Hence he makes more extensive and more elaborate use of Old Testament prophecy than any other of the evangelists. These prominent features of the first gospel are certainly a fair indication of its special purpose.

Matthew's Gospel adapted to the Jew.

The ancient tradition that Mark's Gospel is substantially that of Peter,[2] is confirmed by the general style, scope, and plan of the gospel itself. Peter's active and rapid manner would naturally dictate a condensed and pointed gospel. His ministry to such Gentile converts as Cornelius would be likely to show the need of an account of the Lord Jesus especially adapted to that class of minds. Mark's Gospel well meets this ideal. It omits genealogies and long discourses. It has comparatively few citations from Old Testament prophecy. It portrays the life of Jesus as that of a mighty conqueror. It was certainly adapted to meet the tastes of the Roman mind, whose ideals of rapidity, power, and triumph were well expressed in the famous words of Cæsar, "I came, I saw, I conquered."

Mark's Gospel adapted to the Roman taste.

Luke's Gospel, declared by the voice of the most ancient tradition

[1] Against Heresies, book iii, chap. i, 1. That Matthew's Gospel was originally written in Hebrew, or Aramæan, but early put forth in Greek by the hand or under the oversight of Matthew himself, is now the opinion of many of the best biblical scholars. But the arguments *pro* and *con* may be seen in Meyer, Commentary on Matthew, Introduction; Alford, Greek Testament, Prolegomena; Introduction to New Testament by Hug, De Wette, Bleek, Davidson, etc., and Biblical Dictionaries of Smith, Kitto, and M'Clintock and Strong.

[2] Eusebius says that Peter, having established the Gospel among the Romans, "so greatly did the splendour of piety enlighten the minds of his hearers, that it was not sufficient to hear but once, nor to receive the unwritten doctrine of the Gospel of God, but they persevered in every variety of entreaties to solicit Mark, as the companion of Peter, that he should leave them a monument of the doctrines thus orally communicated in writing. Nor did they cease their solicitations until they had prevailed with the man, and thus became the means of that history which is called the Gospel according to Mark."—Eccl. Hist., book ii, chap. xv (Bohn's Ed.).

Luke's the Pauline Gospel to the Gentiles.

to be the substance of Paul's preaching,[1] is pre-eminently the gospel of the Gentiles. It deals more than any other gospel with Jesus' words and works for the whole world. Luke alone records the mission of the seventy. He alone records the parable of the Good Samaritan, and that of the Prodigal Son. He narrates the journey and ministry in Perræa, a comparatively heathen land. But while adding many things of this kind, he also sets forth in his own way the main facts recorded in Matthew and Mark.[2] And the three together, because of the general view they give of the same great outline of facts, are called the Synoptic Gospels.

Not without reason has the Gospel of Luke been believed to have special adaptations to the mind of the Greeks. As a mighty universal conqueror was the grand ideal of a Roman, so the perfection of humanity was the dream of the noblest Grecian intellect. Luke's orderly narrative, with all those delicate traits which none but the "beloved physician" could so well detail, is pre-eminently the gospel of the Son of man, the gospel of universal redemption.[3]

John's the spiritual Gospel of the life of faith.

The Gospel of John has manifestly a specific design different from that of the other gospels. Its lofty spiritual tone, its fulness of doctrine, and its profound conceptions of the divinity of the Lord, arrest the attention of all readers. "The Synoptic Gospels," says Westcott, "contain the gospel of the infant Church; that of St. John the gospel of its

[1] Irenæus Against Heresies, iii, 1. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist., book vi, chap. xxv, where Origen is quoted as saying: "The third Gospel is that according to Luke, the gospel commended by Paul, which was written for the converts from the Gentiles."

[2] "The Gospel of St. Paul," says Westcott, "is, in its essential characteristics, the complementary history to that of St. Matthew. The difference between the two may be seen in their opening chapters. The first words of the Hebrew evangelist gave the clue to his whole narrative; and so the first chapter of St. Luke, with its declarations of the blessedness of faith, and the exaltation of the lowly, lead at once to the point from which he contemplated the life of Him who was 'to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.' The perfect manhood of the Saviour, and the consequent mercy and universality of his covenant, is his central subject, rather than the temporal relations or eternal basis of Christianity. In the other gospels we find our King, our Lord, our God; but in St. Luke we see the image of our great High Priest, 'made perfect through suffering, tempted in all points as we are, but without sin,' so that each trait of human feeling and natural love helps us to complete the outline and confirms its truthfulness."—Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, pp. 370–372.

[3] See Da Costa, The Four Witnesses, pp. 185–225, and Prof. D. S. Gregory, Why Four Gospels? pp. 207–276. In both these valuable works the idea that Matthew's is the gospel for the Jew, Mark's for the Roman, Luke's for the Greek, and John's for the Church is elaborated with much detail. Gregory, however, at some points, carries the matter to an undue extreme.

maturity. The first combine to give the wide experience of the many; the last embraces the deep mysteries treasured up by the one. All alike are consciously based on the same great facts; but yet it is possible, in a more limited sense, to describe the first as historical, and the last as ideal; though the history necessarily points to truths which lie beyond all human experience, and the 'ideas' only connect that which was once for all realized on earth with the eternal of which it was the revelation."[1] Clement of Alexandria, as quoted by Eusebius,[2] also observes: "John, last of all, perceiving that what had reference to the body in the gospel of our Saviour was sufficiently detailed, and, being encouraged by his familiar friends, and urged by the Spirit, he wrote a spiritual gospel." John's Gospel is pre-eminently the gospel of the word of God. It deals especially with the mystery of God in Christ, and sets forth the Lord as the life of men and the light of the world. It is a revelation of the life of faith in the Son of God. It was written "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye may have life in his name" (John xx, 31).[3]

Characteristics of the several evangelists.

Keeping in mind the leading idea and aim of each of the four gospels, we may study their several characteristics to advantage. It will often be found that what at first arrests attention as an inconsistency is an evidence of the scrupulous fidelity of the evangelist. What sceptical critics have pronounced unaccountable omissions may be evidences of special design. The vivid portrayal of events, the little incidents true to life, the touches of pathos, the forms of expression which none but eyewitnesses of the events could use, are a mightier proof of the credibility of the gospels than all the alleged discrepancies are of their incredibility.

Noticeable characteristics of Matthew.

Considering now, for example, the Gospel of Matthew as designed especially for Jewish readers, how natural for him to announce it as the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, *the son of David, the son of Abraham.* How to his purpose to describe the birth of Jesus, in the days of Herod the

[1] Introduction to Gospels, p. 254. [2] Ecclesiastical History, vi, 14.

[3] Thus Westcott, "The subject which is announced in the opening verses is realized, step by step, in the course of the narrative. The word 'came to his own,' and they 'received him not;' but others 'received him,' and thereby became 'sons of God.' This is the theme which requires for its complete treatment, not a true record of events or teaching, but a view of the working of both on the hearts of men. The ethical element is co-ordinate with the historical; and the end which the evangelist proposes to himself answers to this double current of his gospel. He wrote that men might believe the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing—by spiritual fellowship—might have life in his name."—Introduction to Gospels, pp. 276, 277.

king, as one that was *born King of the Jews*, and born in Bethlehem, according to the prophets. How the Sermon on the Mount is presented in one connected whole, as if it were a republication of the ancient law of Sinai in a new and better form. How the series of miracles in the eighth and ninth chapters follows as if designed to evidence the divine power and authority of this new Lawgiver and King. The calling, ordaining, and sending out the twelve disciples (chap. x) was like the election of a new Israel to reclaim the twelve tribes scattered abroad. The seven parables of chap. xiii are a revelation of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom which he, as the Christ of God, was about to establish. Then follows ample record of the conflict between this King of the Jews and the scribes and Pharisees, who looked for another kind of Messianic kingdom (xiv–xxiii). The great apocalyptic discourse of chaps. xxiv and xxv discloses the end of that age as in the near future, and is in striking analogy with the spirit and forms of Old Testament prophecy. The record of the last supper, the betrayal, the crucifixion, and the resurrection, completes the picture of the great Prophet, Priest, and King. The entire book has thus a unity of purpose and of detail admirably adapted to be the gospel to the Hebrews, and to show to all the thoughtful in Israel that Jesus was indeed the Messiah of whom the prophets had spoken. Moreover, while thus breathing the Hebrew spirit, it has fewer explanations of Jewish customs than the other gospels.

Omissions of the earlier Gospels not without a purpose.

Many have deemed it strange that Matthew says nothing about the first miracle of Jesus, at Cana, or of the healing at Capernaum of the nobleman's son, or of the resurrection of Lazarus, facts of such great interest. These notable miracles are omitted in all the synoptic gospels, and some have rushed to the conclusion that they were unknown to Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Much more reasonable is the suggestion of Upham, that in the earlier oral gospel, preached everywhere by the apostles, and represented in substance in the synoptic gospels, it was agreed, as a matter of prudence, to abstain from any mention of living persons who would be exposed to peril by such a publication of their connexion with Jesus. The persecution that arose upon the death of Stephen would naturally seek out the relatives of the hated Nazarene, and any other parties whose testimony mightily confirmed the divine power of Jesus. The evangelists and apostles would not needlessly expose the nobleman or his son, who were probably still living at Capernaum. They would not publish the home of the relatives of the mother of Jesus, where he wrought his first miracle, nor jeopardize the lives of Mary and Martha and

their friends at Bethany by sending forth a publication likely to intensify the feeling that was already so violent against them.[1]

The above considerations are sufficient to set aside all arguments against the genuineness and credibility of the gospels, which are based upon omissions which modern critics may deem strange. To the beloved disciple, John, who was expected to outlive the others, it was appropriately left to record the fuller account of Jesus' Judean ministry, and to make mention of persons and events of whom it was inexpedient to write so fully at an earlier time. And a minute study of the peculiar characteristics of Mark, Luke, and John, will show that, both in what they record and in what they omit, each consistently carries out his own individual plan and purpose.[2]

The inner and essential harmony of the gospels is accordingly enhanced by their diversity. These narratives constitute a fourfold witness of the Christ of God. As broad-minded philosophers have discerned in the national characteristics and history of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans a providential preparation of the world for the Gospel, so in the gospels themselves may be seen, in turn, a providential record of the world's Redeemer, wonderfully adapted by manifold forms of statement to impress and convince the various minds of men. We

The harmony of the Gospels enhanced by their diversity.

[1] "Bethany," observes Upham, "was one of the suburbs of Jerusalem. The miracle there wrought was the immediate occasion of the arrest and trial of Jesus, though the hatred of the Jews had kindled to the heat of murder before the raising of Lazarus, and even the neighbourhood of the unholy city had become so unsafe that Jesus stayed on the eastern bank of the Jordan. While there Mary and her sister Martha sent this message, 'Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick.' And, when he would go to Bethany, the thoughtful Thomas said, 'Let us go and die with him.' These words disprove the notion that most of the disciples were then away from their Master; his time was too near for that; but they do prove not only the chivalry of St. Thomas, but his sagacity. He judged rightly of the peril of the place and time; for, as soon as the chief priests knew that Jesus was again so near, and heard of what he did at Bethany, they took counsel how they might kill him.

"At that time it was their plan to kill Lazarus also. Only St. John records this, and he does not say how Lazarus escaped. But such was the wealth and rank of the family of Bethany that its love for Jesus greatly enraged the rulers of the Jews; and, as Mary foresaw the Lord's death, she may have seen the danger of Lazarus, and the family have had the power to guard against it. Perhaps they did so because of some intimation from their Lord; all we know is, that the Jews then failed to kill Lazarus. But such was their purpose then; and this purpose would naturally revive in the midst of the provocations that led them to murder St. Stephen."—Thoughts on the Holy Gospels, pp. 170, 171.

[2] See these characteristics elaborated in detail by Da Costa and Gregory in their works named above. Comp. also Westcott's chapter on The Characteristics of the Gospels, in his Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, pp. 217–253.

should not say that Matthew wrote for the Jews only, Mark for the Romans, and Luke for the Greeks. That would imply that when these several nations ceased these gospels would have no further special adaptation. We should rather bear in mind that, so far as the several gospels have the special adaptations named, they have a divinely-ordained fitness to make the person and character of Jesus the more powerfully impressive upon all classes of men. The types of mind and character represented by those great historic races are ever appearing, and require perpetually the manifold testimony of Jesus furnished by the four evangelists. The four are better than one. We need the living picture of the Prince of the house of David as given by Matthew, for it reveals him as the perfecter of the old economy, the fulfiller of the law and the prophets. We need the briefer gospel of the mighty Son of God as given by Mark. Its rapid style and movement affect multitudes more deeply than a gospel so fully imbued with the Old Testament spirit as that of Matthew. "If in the first gospel," observes Ellicott, "we recognise transitions from theocratic glories to meek submissions, in the second we see our Redeemer in one light only, of majesty and power. If in St. Matthew's record we behold now the glorified and now the suffering Messiah, in St. Mark's vivid pages we see only the all-powerful Son of God; the voice we hear is that of the Lion of the tribe of Judah."[1] Luke's gospel, on the other hand, opens before us the broader vision of the Son of man, born, to be sure, under the law, but born of a woman, "a light for revelation of the Gentiles," as well as for the glory of Israel (Luke ii, 32). He appropriately traces the Redeemer's lineage away back beyond David, and beyond Abraham, to Adam, the son of God (Luke iii, 38). This Pauline gospel gives us the living embodiment of the perfect Man, the Friend and Saviour of helpless humanity. Not only does it offer the noblest ideal to the mind of the Greek; it must always have a charm for every Theophilus who has a disposition and desire to know the immovable certainty (*τὴν ἀσφάλειαν*, Luke i, 4) of the things of the Gospel. And John's record notably supplements the others. It is pre-eminently the gospel for the Church of God It is the gospel of the heart of Jesus, and the disciple who leaned upon the Lord's bosom, and imbibed so fully the inspirations of that sacred heart, was the only one of the twelve who could write this inimitable gospel of the Word, the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Resurrection, and the Life.

In view of the marvellous harmonies and the all-embracing scope and purposes of the written gospels of our Lord, how unworthy the

[1] Historical Lectures on the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, pp. 39, 40, Boston, 1863.

scepticism that fastens upon their little differences of statement (which may be explained by divers reasonable suppositions), and magnifies these differences into contradictions with design to disparage the credibility of the evangelists. Why puzzle over the fact that Matthew and Mark relate that the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus reviled him, while Luke says that one reviled him, and was rebuked by the other, who prayed to the Lord, and received the promise of paradise? Is it not supposable that during the three hours of mortal agony on the cross all these things might have occurred? Great variety is noticeable in the different accounts of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, but no man has ever been able to show a real discrepancy or contradiction.[1] In the absence of particulars we may not be able to detail the exact order of events, but when it is shown, on a number of hypotheses, that it was possible for all the events to take place, the diversity of statements becomes an undeniable evidence that they all are true.

Unreasonableness of magnifying the alleged Gospel discrepancies into contradictions.

[1] The following order of events following the resurrection is given by Gardiner: "The resurrection itself occurred at or before the earliest dawn of the first day of the week (Matt. xxviii, 1; Mark xvi, 2; Luke xxiv, 1; John xxi, 1). The women coming to the sepulchre find the stone rolled away and the body gone. They are amazed and perplexed. Mary Magdalene alone runs to tell Peter and John (John xx, 2). The other women remain, enter the tomb, see the angels, are charged by them to announce the resurrection to the disciples, and depart on their errand. Meantime Peter and John run very rapidly (verse 4) to the sepulchre. (A glance at the plan of Jerusalem shows that there were so many different gates by which persons might pass between the city and the sepulchre that they might easily have failed to meet the women on their way). They enter the tomb and are astonished at the orderly arrangement of the grave-clothes, and then return to the city. Mary follows to the tomb, unable quite to keep pace with them, and so falling behind. She remains standing at the entrance after they had gone, and, looking in, sees the angels. Then turning about she sees Jesus himself, and receives his charge for the disciples. This was our Lord's first appearance after his resurrection (Mark xvi, 9). To return to the women who were on their way from the sepulchre to the disciples: They went in haste, yet more slowly than Peter and John. There were many of them, and being in a state of great agitation and alarm (Mark xvi, 8) they appear to have become separated, and to have entered the city by different gates. One party of them, in their astonishment and fear, say nothing to any one (Matt. xxviii, 8); the others run to the disciples and announce all that they had seen, namely, the vision of the angels (Mark xvi, 8; Luke xxiv, 9–11). At this time, before any report had come in of the appearance of our Lord himself, the two disciples set out for Emmaus (Luke xxiv, 13). Soon after Mary Magdalene comes in announcing that she had actually seen the risen Lord (Mark xvi, 10, 11; John xx, 18). While these things are happening the first-mentioned party of the women are stopped on the way by the appearance of the Lord himself, and they also receive a charge to his disciples (Matt. xxviii, 9, 10). Beyond this point there is no difficulty in the narrative.—Harmony of the Gospels in Greek, pp. 253, 254.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PROGRESS OF DOCTRINE AND ANALOGY OF FAITH.

The Holy Scriptures a growth.

The interpreter of the Holy Scriptures must never forget that the Bible in its entirety, as now possessed by the Church, was no sudden gift from heaven, but the slow and gradual accretion of many centuries. It is made up of many parts, which were produced at many different times. For the first twenty-five centuries of human history, according to the common chronology, the world was without any part of our Bible.[1] Then, in the course of forty years, the Books of Moses appeared. Possibly the Book of Job belongs to that early period. Subsequently such historical collections as the Books of Joshua and Judges were compiled, and in due time other histories, with psalms, proverbs, and the oracles of prophets, were gathered into many separate rolls or volumes, and at length, after the Babylonian captivity, this whole body of sacred literature was combined together, and came to be recognized as a book of divine authority. The different writings of the New Testament all appeared within a period of about half a century, but they also furnish the means of tracing the development of life and thought in the early apostolic Church. Our present canonical Scriptures, therefore, are to be recognised as the records of a progressive divine revelation. We recognise the Spirit of God as the presiding and controlling wisdom which shaped these lively oracles. He not only employed holy men in the accomplishment of his purpose (2 Sam. xxiii, 2; Luke i, 70; Acts i, 16; iii, 18; 2 Peter i, 21), but also the ministry of angels (Acts vii, 53; Gal. iii, 19; Heb. ii, 2). A minute divine providence secured the embodiment of the entire revelation in the written forms in which we now possess it. The same God who spoke in the last days in the person of his Son spoke also in the older revelations (Heb. i, 1), and we may search his word in confidence that divine order and wisdom will be found from the beginning to the end.

The Book of Genesis exhibits, as we have seen (pp. 109, 110), a

[1] That is, in its present form. No doubt the narratives of the creation, of the fall, and the flood, were handed down by oral tradition. They may, indeed, long before Moses' time, have existed in written form, and, with the genealogical tables and other fragmentary portions of patriarchal history, have constituted a sort of sacred literature among the descendants of Shem.

series of evolutions, which serve well to illustrate the progress and order of the divine revelation. First comes the account of the miraculous beginning, the cutting, forming, and making (בָּרָא and עָשָׂה) of Adam's world (Gen. i, 1–ii, 3). This passage is most naturally explained as the supernatural preparation of the heavens and land where the first man appeared. From that geographical and historical beginning we trace a well-defined series of generations (תּוֹלְדוֹת). The first series comprises the "generations of the heavens and the land" (ii, 4). The starting-point is "a day of Jehovah God's making land and heavens," when as yet no plant or herb of the new creation had commenced the processes of growth; no rain had yet fallen, no man to work the soil had yet appeared (ver. 5). It is the morning of the sixth day of the creative week. The whole surface of the ground is watered, and the processes of growth begin (ver. 6). Man is formed (יָצַר) from the dust of the soil, and becomes (וַיְהִי) a living soul by the breath of Jehovah God (ver. 7). His formation is, therefore, conceived as a generation or birth out of the heavens and the land by the breath (נִשְׁמָה) of God. Then the woman was produced from the man, another step in the process of these generations (ver. 23; comp. 1 Cor. xi, 8). Then follows the narrative of the fall, showing how the first man was from the earth and earthy (1 Cor. xv, 47), and by disobedience lost his original relation to God. The first generations run to violence and crime, and become more and more earthly until Seth is born, and with him the revelation takes a new departure. "The book of the generations of Adam" (v, 1) is not a record of Adam's origin, but of his posterity in the line of Seth. But again the race deteriorates, and the sons of Seth, so much nobler than the Cainites, and other children of Adam, that they are called the sons of God (vi, 2), intermarry with the fair but ignoble daughters of men, and the land is filled with violence. With Noah, who was just and upright, and walked with God (vi, 9), another series of generations takes its departure, and the flood destroys all the rest of men.

Genesis a series of evolutions and of revelations.

After the flood God establishes a covenant with Noah (ix, 9), and through him foretells the honour that shall come to the dwellings of Shem (ix, 27). But the tendencies of the sons of Noah still appear to be earthy, and their generations are rapidly sketched (x). Shem's line is traced to Terah (xi, 10–26), with whose son, Abram, the covenant of grace and the promise of unspeakable glory in the after times are set forth in fuller light. The history of Abraham, the friend of God, first exhibits in clear outline the wonderful condescension of Jehovah; he is separated

From Noah onward.

from country and kindred, and disciplined in faith. He receives the covenant of circumcision, and the promise of a seed through whom all nations shall be blessed. Jehovah speaks to him in visions and dreams, and in the person of his angel. Additional revelations come in connexion with Isaac and Ishmael, the generations of Jacob branch out into twelve tribes, and the prophetic blessing of the dying patriarch reveals the outline of their history in after times (Gen. xlix).

A progress of Revelation in Genesis.

It is impossible to trace the record of these ten generations of the Book of Genesis without observing the steady progress of divine revelation. Again and again the history, darkened by the growth of human wickedness, fastens upon a divinely chosen name, and from it takes a new departure. With each new series of generations some new promise is given, or some great purpose of God is brought to light. While the tendency of the race is to grow worse and worse, there appears at the same time the unwavering purpose of the Almighty to choose out and maintain a holy seed. Thus the Book of Genesis is an essential part of the history of redemption.

The Mosaic legislation a new era of revelation.

The centuries of Egyptian bondage are rapidly passed over, but the history of the deliverance from Egypt is detailed with notable fulness. Jehovah's triumph over the gods of Egypt, the establishing of the passover, the journey to Sinai, the giving of the law, the building of the tabernacle, and the entire Mosaic ministry and legislation were the beginnings of a new era. Captious critics, incompetent to grasp the scope and moral grandeur of the Mosaic system, may cavil at some of its enactments, and forget that Moses had to do with a nation of emancipated serfs; but the philosophical historian will ever recognise the Sinaitic legislation as one of the greatest wonders of the world. The Decalogue, sublimely uttered from the mount of God, embodies the substance of all true religion and all sound morality. The construction of the tabernacle, modelled after a divine plan (Exod. xxv, 40), and the order of the Levitical service, most truly symbolize the profoundest conceptions of the curse of sin and the power of God in redemption.

Doctrine of God.

But, aside from the Decalogue and the symbolism of the Mosaic cultus, how full and comprehensive the doctrinal and moral teachings of the last four books of the Pentateuch. The personality, attributes, nd moral perfections of God are set forth in unspeakably superior form to that of any and all other religious systems of the ancient or modern world. The self-existence and eternity of God, his holiness, justice, and mercy, his

wisdom and his providence, are revealed in many ways. How awfully sublime and yet how gracious that revelation to Moses in the mount, when "Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and called in the name of Jehovah; and Jehovah passed by before him, and called: Jehovah, Jehovah, God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in kindness and truth, keeping kindness for thousands, lifting iniquity, and transgression and sin, but in punishing will not let go unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers upon children, and upon children of children, upon the third and upon the fourth" (generations). Exod. xxxiv, 5–7.

Such a revelation would necessarily beget the holiest reverence, and at the same time evince that he was worthy of all love. Hence the commandment, "Thou shalt love Jehovah, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deut. vi, 5). This doctrine of God furnished the basis of a superior ethical code. The true Israelite was required to guard the morals of his neighbour, and love him as himself. He must not yield to feelings of vengeance, nor hold bitterness in his heart toward any of his brethren (Lev. xix, 17, 18). He must not oppress the poor and the needy, but leave large gleanings for them in his harvest field (Lev. xix, 10). He must not even allow his neighbour's ox or sheep to go astray, but seek to restore them to him as if they were his own (Deut. xxii, 1–3). Even in taking the young of birds for any proper purpose, he must, in kindness and consideration, spare the mother bird. Surely a code which enacted such humane provisions ought never to have been charged with barbarous severity.[1] Its severest penalties were grounded in the highest expediency,[2] and ample securities were provided against injustice and capricious acts of power. While the governments of all the great nations of that age were despotic and largely barbarous, that of the Mosaic legislation was essentially republican.[3]

Superior ethical and civil code.

The Pentateuch holds the same relation to the subsequent books

[1] See Sewall, Humaneness of the Mosaic Code, Bib. Sacra for 1862, pp. 368–384.

[2] Barrows observes: "The attitude of the Mosaic economy toward the Gentile nations was indeed severe, but it was the severity of love and goodwill. It had for its object not their destruction, but a speedier preparation of the way for the advent of Christ, in whom the promise, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,' was to find its fulfilment."—Missionary Spirit of the Psalms and Prophets. Bib. Sacra for 1860, p. 459.

[3] See the excellences of the Mosaic legislation elaborately set forth by Michaelis, Commentaries on the Laws of Moses (Eng. Trans. by Smith, 4 vols., Lond., 1814); Warburton, The Divine Legation of Moses; Graves, on the Four Last Books of the Pentateuch (Lond., 1850).

of the Old Testament that the gospels hold to the rest of the New Testament. It contains in some form the substance of all the Old Testament revelation, but it intimates in many a passage that other revelations will be given. It assumes that a great and glorious future is awaiting the chosen nation, and indicates the ways by which the glories may be realized. At the same time it warns against the possibility of lamentable failure. The entire system of Mosaic laws, moral, civil, and ceremonial, was wisely adapted to train the Israelitish nation, and served as a schoolmaster to prepare them and the world for the reception of the Gospel of Christ. So far was Moses from regarding his work as final in the training of Israel, that he announced by the word of Jehovah that another prophet should arise, to whom divine revelations would be given, and whom the people should obey (Deut. xviii, 15–19). The last words of the great lawgiver are full of warning, of promise, and of prophecy (Deut. xxix–xxxiii).

The Pentateuch fundamental to Old Testament revelations.

After the death of Moses Joshua received his divine commission to carry forward the great work of establishing Israel in the land of promise. Jehovah spoke to him as he did to Moses (Josh. i, 1; iii, 7; iv, 1). He also revealed himself in the person of his angel (Josh. v, 13), and in all the history of the conquest and settlement of Canaan, Jehovah spoke as frequently and familiarly with Joshua as he had done with Moses. In the dark times of the Judges God left himself not without prophetic witness. Revelations came to Deborah and Gideon and Manoah. At length Samuel arose when prophecy was rare in Israel (1 Sam. iii, 1), and in his day the schools of the prophets appear (1 Sam. x, 5; xix, 20). When David became king of all Israel, the promise and prophecy of the Messiah assumed a fuller form.

Revelation continued after Moses.

The word which came to the king through Nathan the prophet (2 Sam. vii, 4–17) was the germ of the Messianic psalms, and the entire collection of lyrics, which constitutes the Hebrew psalter, is an invaluable index of the highest religious thought and feeling of Israel in the times of David and later. The Messianic hope is enhanced by a variety of conceptions: he is the anointed King in Zion, declared to be the very Son of Jehovah (Psa. ii); he is a reigning Lord, who is at the same time a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. cx); his majesty and grace are extolled above all the sons of men (Psa. xlv); but he is also a sufferer, crying out as if forsaken of God, while his enemies deride him and cast lots for his vesture (Psa. xxii); he even sinks into the grave, but exults in hope and confidence that he shall not see corruption (Psa. xvi). The doctrine of God is also set forth in the psalter

Theology of the Psalter.

in new force and beauty. He is Lord of earth and sea and heavens, ruling on high and beholding all; the almighty Preserver, the omnipresent Spirit, infinitely perfect in every moral excellence; tender, compassionate, long-suffering, marvellous in mercy, and yet terrible in his judgments, fearful in holiness, ever vindicating the truth; he is the absolute and eternal God, the fountain of life and of light. The guardianship of angels (Psa. xxxiv, 7; xci, 11) and the hope of a blissful immortality (xvii, 15) were not wanting in the psalmist's faith. The doctrines of redeeming grace, of pardon from sin, of cleansing from guilt; the hidden life of trust; the personal approach of the worshipper into closest fellowship with God; the joy and gladness of that fellowship, and the probationary discipline of the saints, are doctrines which find manifold expression in the hymn book of the Israelitish people.[1]

The Solomonic Proverbial Philosophy.

The age of Solomon was the golden age of the proverbial philosophy of the Hebrews. The Book of Proverbs represents the Old Testament doctrines of practical wisdom (חָכְמָה), and is the great textbook of biblical ethics. It brings out in fuller form and in a great variety of precepts the ethical principles embodied in the Mosaic law. It has to do with practical life, and so serves, at the right stage in the progress of the divine revelation, to exalt that human element in which pure religion necessarily finds some of its most beautiful manifestations. "The Book of Proverbs," says Stanley, "is not on a level with the Prophets or the Psalms. It approaches human things and things divine from quite another side. It has even something of a worldly, prudential look, unlike the rest of the Bible. But this is the very reason why its recognition as a sacred book is so useful. It is the philosophy of practical life. It is the sign to us that the Bible does not despise common sense and discretion. It impresses upon us, in the most forcible manner, the value of intelligence and prudence, and of a good education. The whole strength of the Hebrew language, and of the sacred authority of the book, is thrown upon these homely truths. It deals, too, in that refined, discriminating,

[1] "This book," says Calvin, "not unreasonably, am I wont to style an anatomy of all parts of the soul, for no one will discover in himself a single feeling whereof the image is not reflected in this mirror. All griefs, sorrows, fears, doubts, hopes, cares, and anxieties—in short, all the tumultuous agitations wherewith the minds of men are wont to be tossed—the Holy Ghost hath here represented to the life. The rest of Scripture contains the commands which God gave to his servants to be delivered unto us. But here the prophets themselves, holding converse with God, inasmuch as they lay bare all their inmost feelings, invite or impel every one of us to self-examination, that of all the infirmities to which we are liable, and all the sins of which we are so full, none may remain hidden."—Commentary on the Psalms, Preface.

careful view of the finer shades of human character, so often overlooked by theologians, but so necessary to any true estimate of human life."[1]

Old Test. revelation reached its highest spirituality in the great prophets.

In the great prophets of the Old Testament the depth and spirituality of the Mosaic religion attained their highest expression. We have already outlined the progressive character of the Messianic prophecies, and seen the organic and vital relations of prophecy to the history of the Israelitish people (p. 316). The Messianic hope, first uttered in the garden of Eden (Gen. iii, 15), was a fountain-head from which a gradually increasing stream went forth, receiving constant accessions as prophet after prophet arose commissioned to utter some clearer oracle. In a general way, at least, each new prophet added to the work of his predecessors.[2] The prophecy of Jonah, one of the earliest written, emphasizes Jehovah's compassion upon a great heathen city which repents at his word. It is conspicuously an oracle of hope to the Gentiles. Joel, the ancient apocalyptist, sees in the desolating judgments on the land signs of the coming of Jehovah, and calls upon the people to rend their hearts rather than their garments in evidence of contrite humiliation before God (Joel ii, 12). His visions stretch away to the latter times when the Spirit of Jehovah shall be poured out upon all flesh, and whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved (ii, 28, 32). Hosea bewails the idolatry of Israel and Judah, but sees great hope for them if they will but offer their lips as sacrificial offerings of prayer and praise (Hos. xiv, 2). The formal ceremonial worship of the nation was fast losing all its deep sacredness, and ceasing to be a means of holy, heartfelt devotion. With such outward unspiritual worship Jehovah could not be pleased, and he says in Amos (v, 21, 22):

[1] History of the Jewish Church, second series, p. 269. New York, 1869.

[2] R. Payne Smith observes: "Men never do understand anything unless already in their minds they have some kindred ideas, something that leads up to the new thought which they are required to master. Our knowledge grows, but it is by the gradual accumulation of thought upon thought, and by following out ideas already gained to their legitimate conclusions. God followed this rule even in the supernatural knowledge bestowed upon the prophets. It was a growing light, a gradual dawning preparatory to the sunrise, and no flash of lightning, illuminating everything for one moment with ghastly splendour, to be succeeded immediately by a deeper and more oppressive gloom. . . . Carefully, and with prayer, the prophets studied the teaching of their predecessors, and by the use of the light already given were made fit for more light, and to be the spokesmen of Jehovah in teaching ever more clearly to the Church those truths which have regenerated mankind."—Bampton Lectures. Prophecy a Preparation for Christ, pp. 304, 305. Boston, 1870.

I have hated, I have despised your feasts,
And I will not breathe in your assemblies;
For if ye offer me burnt-offerings and your meat-offerings
I will not be delighted,
And a peace-offering of your fatlings I will not regard.
Put away from me the noise of thy songs;
And the music of thy harps I will not hear.
And let judgment be rolled along as the waters,
And righteousness as a perennial stream.

It would thus appear that as idolatry increased, and the ceremonial worship became cold, heartless, and idolatrous, the prophets, as inspired watchmen and teachers, turned the thoughts of the people to those deeper spiritual truths of which the ceremonial cultus furnished only the outer symbols. They yearned for a purer worship, and a more real and vital approach to God. They began to realize, what the New Testament so fully reveals, that the law was only a shadow, not the very likeness, of the good things to come, and that the ritual sacrifices could never perfect the worshippers who depended on them alone (Heb. x, 1). Thus Micah (vi, 6–8):

With what shall I come before Jehovah—
Bend myself to the God of height?
Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings?
With calves, sons of a year?
Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams,
With myriads of streams of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
Fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has showed thee, O man, what is good;
And what is Jehovah seeking from thee,
But to execute judgment and the love of mercy,
And humbly to walk with thy God?

Written prophecy reaches a climax in Isaiah.

In the Book of Isaiah the prophetic word reaches a lofty climax. This evangelist among the prophets seems to rise at will above the limitations of time, and to see the past, the present, and the future converge in great historic epochs vital to the interests of the kingdom of God. Although the first thirty-nine chapters deal mainly with the matters of contemporary interest and note, they are filled with glowing visions of Messianic triumph. The first part of the second chapter, apparently borrowed from Micah, portrays the universality and glory of that spiritual dominion which is to supplant Judaism, and go forth from Jerusalem to establish peace among all nations. The Messianic promise again and again finds varied expression (chap. vii, 14;

ix, 1–7; xi, 1–10). Where, in all the pictures of a coming golden age, can be found a more beautiful outline than Isa. xxxv? But in the last twenty-seven chapters Isaiah's prophecies exhibit their highest spirituality. He depicts things in their divine relations, and contemplates the redemption of Israel as from the position of the high and exalted One who dwells in eternity (lvii, 15). His thoughts and ways are loftier than those of men, even as the heavens are higher than the earth (lv, 8, 9). Looking away from the darkening present, and exulting in glowing visions of Messiah's triumph, the prophet often speaks in the name and person of Messiah and his elect, and apprehends the glories of his reign as the creation of a new heavens and a new earth.

The prophecies of Daniel.

The prophecies of Daniel exhibit the increasing light of divine revelation which came when Israel, by exile, was brought in contact with the great heathen world-powers. Daniel speaks as one who looks out from the midst of the operations of great empires, and sees a throne higher than that of the kings of Babylon or of Persia, and forces more numerous and mighty than all the armies of the world (Dan. vii, 9, 10). "In him," says R. Payne Smith, "prophecy has a new development; it breaks away from the bonds of Jewish thought, and sets before us the grand onward march of the world's history, and the Christian Church as the centre and end of all history."[1] His visions make prominent a determined END or consummation, when a desolating abomination shall destroy the sanctuary (ix, 26, 27; comp. Matt. xxiv, 15; Mark xiii, 14; Luke xxi, 20):

> And many, sleeping in the dust of the ground, shall awake,
> These to life eternal,
> And those to shame and eternal contempt.
> And the wise ones shall shine as the brightness of the firmament,
> And those who make many righteous
> As the stars for ever and ever (Dan. xii, 2, 3).

Prophecies of Ezekiel.

In some respects Ezekiel surpasses Daniel in the depth and fulness of his revelations. His vision of the cherubim and the theophany is set forth in the first chapter of his prophecy with a wealth of suggestive symbols not to be found elsewhere in the Old Testament, and the detailed description of the new temple and land of Israel (chapters xl–xlviii) is an anticipation of John's vision of the new heavens and the new earth (Rev. xxi). Ezekiel's city of Jehovah-Shammah (xlviii, 35) is no other than the New Jerusalem of John. The doctrine of the resurrection, which

[1] Prophecy a Preparation for Christ, p. 238.

in Isaiah (xxvi, 19) is suggested by a striking apostrophe, is expressed in formal statement by Daniel (xii, 2), and assumed as a common belief in the imagery of Ezekiel (xxxvii, 1–14).

Post-exile prophets.

After the Babylonian exile we note that Haggai sees in the second temple a glory greater than that of the former (Hag. ii, 9). Zechariah combines in his prophetic book the varied symbolism of Daniel and Ezekiel with the lofty spirituality of Isaiah. And the "burden of Jehovah's word to Israel by the hand of Malachi" (Mal. i, 1), the last of the Old Testament prophets, is a series of rebukes to a false and heartless formalism, and an earnest call to repentance and personal self-consecration.[1]

Prophetic link between the Old and New Testaments.

Passing over the four hundred years of silence between Malachi and the advent of Jesus Christ, we find the two Testaments linked by a noticeable prophetic bond. The Old Testament closes with a promise that Elijah the prophet shall come before the great day of Jehovah, and the gospel history of the New Testament opens with the ministry of this Elijah who was to come (Luke i, 17; Matt. xi, 14; xvii, 10–13). But John the Baptist, though filled with the spirit and power of Elijah, was merely a forerunner, a herald, a voice (John i, 23), provided in the divine order to prepare the way of the Lord. His ministry was professedly introductory to the Gospel Age, and his constant testimony was that one mightier than himself was about to come, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. iii, 11).

Christ's teachings the substance, but not the final form, of Christian doctrine.

The ministry and words of the Lord Jesus, as recorded in the gospels, constitute the substance of all Christian doctrines. As the five books of Moses really embody the germs of all subsequent revelation, so in a clearer form the teachings of Jesus embrace every great truth of the Christian faith. But our Lord himself was explicit in declaring that his own teaching must needs be supplemented by the fuller revelations of the Spirit. He taught by parable, by precept, and by example, but he found the hearts of the people and of his own disciples too heavy to apprehend the grand scope and spirituality of his Gospel, and declared that it was expedient for him to

[1] R. Payne Smith observes that prophecy "was not withdrawn abruptly. It still lingered in those beautiful psalms of degrees sung by the exiles, and in those prophets who helped in rearing the second house. But at the dispersion it had done its work. The Jews wondered that no prophet more arose. We can see why the gift was withdrawn. The time for teaching had ceased. The Jews were children no longer, but grown men; and, like grown men, they must leave home, and go out into all lands to carry to them the truths which the prophets had taught them."—Prophecy a Preparation for Christ, p. 335.

go away in order that the Spirit of truth might come to guide into all the truth, and to teach all things (John xiv, 25, 26; xvi, 7–15).[1]

Revelations continued after the ascension of Jesus.

The Acts of the Apostles shows that divine revelations were continued after the ascension of the Lord. On the day of Pentecost the waiting disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and began to realize as never before the "powers of the coming age" (Heb. vi, 5). Thenceforth they went forth with a heavenly authority to proclaim the newly enunciated truth of God. The angel of the Lord opened the prison doors where the apostles were shut up, and commanded them to continue speaking the words of eternal life (Acts v, 19, 20; comp. xii, 7; xvi, 26). The martyr Stephen saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God (vii, 56). The same Lord Jesus appeared to Saul on his way to Damascus (ix, 17), and also to Ananias, in a vision (ix, 10). Peter was guided into opening the kingdom of God to the Gentiles by a symbolic vision (x, 9–16), and was aided by the ministry of an angel of God (x, 3–7). Special revelations of the Spirit directed Philip and Paul in their journeys (viii, 29, 39; xvi, 7). The great apostle of the Gentiles was repeatedly directed by visions and revelations of God (Acts xvi, 9; xxii, 17–21; comp. 2 Cor. xii, 1–4). Thus it is evident from the Acts of the Apostles that what Jesus *began* to do and teach (Acts i, 1) was carried into completion by those whom he chose to be the authoritative expounders of his word.

The Epistles embody the elaborated teachings of the apostles.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles is a connecting link between the gospels and the epistles. It is essentially a historical introduction to the latter, and without the information it affords, both the gospels and the epistles would be involved in much obscurity. The epistles preserve for the Church the teachings of the apostles, and present them in a form admirably adapted to meet the wants of all classes of readers.[2]

[1] This subject is ably presented in Bernard's Bampton Lectures on the Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament. In Lecture iii he lays down and elaborates the following propositions: "First, The teaching of the Lord in the gospels includes the substance of all Christian doctrine, but does not bear the character of finality. Secondly, The teaching of the Lord in the gospels is a visibly progressive course, but on reaching its highest point announces its own incompleteness, and opens another stage of instruction."—P. 79.

[2] "The prophets," writes Bernard, "delivered *oracles to the people*, but the apostles wrote *letters to the brethren*, letters characterized by all that fulness of unreserved explanation, and that play of various feeling, which are proper to that form of intercourse. It is in its nature a more familiar communication, as between those who are, or should be, equals. That character may less obviously force upon us the sense, that the light which is thrown upon all subjects is that of a divine inspiration; but this is

Great principles, enunciated by Jesus, are elaborated and applied to practical life and experience by the apostolic epistles. The Epistles of Paul, including that to the Hebrews, traverse a wide field of Christian doctrine and experience. Their range may be indicated by the following classification: (1) Dogmatical, discussing especially the doctrines of sin and redemption (Romans and Galatians); (2) Christological (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Hebrews); (3) Ecclesiastical, devoted to the order, practice, and life of the Church (Corinthians); (4) Pastoral (Timothy, Titus, Philemon); and (5) Eschatological (Thessalonians). Of course, none of these epistles is devoted exclusively to one particular subject, but each contains more or less of doctrine, reproof, exhortation, and counsels for practical life. The catholic epistles are concerned more exclusively with the practical affairs of the Christian life. Bernard emphasizes the fact that they were written by Peter and John, the two chief apostles, and James and Jude, the brethren of the Lord. "We take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, and own the highest authority which association with him can give." But he observes that the united epistles of these representatives of our Lord form only a kind of supplement to the writings of Paul. "Had we been permitted," he adds, "to choose our instructors from among 'the glorious company,' three of these names at least would have been uttered by every tongue; and besides our desire to be taught by their lips, we should, as disciples of St. Paul, have felt a natural anxiety to know whether 'James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, added nothing to' (Gal. ii, 6, 9), and took nothing from, the substance of the doctrine which we had received through him. . . . We have words from these very apostles, expressing the mind of their later life, words in which we recognise the mellow tone of age, the settled manner of an old experience, and the long habit of Christian thought."[1]

The Apocalypse of John is, as we have seen (pp. 356–382), a magnificent expansion of the eschatological prophecy of our Lord in Matt. xxiv. It is professedly a further revelation from the Lord Jesus himself (Rev. i, 1). As Paul's Thessalonian Epistles, containing his prophecies of the parousia and the end of the age, were earlier in date than his other

The Apocalypse a fitting conclusion of the New Test. canon.

only the natural effect of the greater fulness of that light; for so the moonbeams fix the eye upon themselves, as they burst through the rifts of rolling clouds, catching the edges of objects and falling on patches of landscape; while, under the settled brightness of the universal and genial day, it is not so much the light that we think of, as the varied scene which it shows."—Progress of Doctrine, p. 156.

[1] Progress of Doctrine, pp. 161, 165.

writings, so John's book of eschatology antedates his gospel. But there is a fitness in having the Book of Revelation close the New Testament canon, even as the Thessalonian Epistles stand in canonical order at the close of Paul's letters to seven different churches.[1] For the Apocalypse reveals the marvellous things of the parousia, and the consummation of that age, when both earth and heavens were shaken, and the former things passed away in order to give place to the Messianic kingdom, which cannot be shaken (Heb. xii, 26–28). No vision could more appropriately close the Christian Canon than the apocalyptic symbol of the heavenly and eternal kingdom.

Attention to progress of doctrine a help to the interpreter.

This rapid outline of the development and progress of doctrine, traceable in the several books of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, will serve to show that God did not communicate his revelations all at once. The successive portions which he revealed from time to time were adapted to the varying conditions and needs of his people. Sometimes the word was left defective because of the hardness of the people's hearts (Mark x, 5). Sometimes the progress was slow, and interrupted by long periods of spiritual decline; then again it broke forth in new developments of national life. A careful attention to this progressive character of the divine revelation is necessary to a thorough interpretation and efficient use of the Holy Scriptures. It helps to set aside the charges of doctrinal and ethical discrepancies which have been alleged. The notion that the Pauline doctrine of justification is something essentially different from the teachings of Jesus, will have no force when it is seen that the whole Epistle to the Romans is virtually a systematic elaboration of our Lord's words to Nicodemus: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii, 16). The allegation that the New Testament contradicts the Old is seen to be an error when we discover that the older revelations were necessarily imperfect, and manifestly not designed to set forth all the truth of God. Things which from one standpoint seem to be contradictory, from another are seen to be only separated portions of one grand harmony. The *lex talionis* and the violent procedures of the blood-avenger were grounded in the righteous demands of retributive justice, and were archaic forms of executing law. A higher civilization, based on clearer revelations, adopts other methods of executing penalty, but recognises the same essential principles of right.

[1] Comp. Bernard, Progress of Doctrine, p. 169.

The Analogy of Faith.

Progress of doctrine explains the true Analogy of Faith.

The foregoing observations prepare the way to a proper apprehension of the "Analogy of Faith" as an aid in expounding the Scriptures. This expression, appropriated from Rom. xii, 6, but used in a different sense from that which the apostle intended,[1] denotes that general harmony of fundamental doctrine which pervades the entire Scriptures. It assumes that the Bible is a self-interpreting book, and what is obscure in one passage may be illuminated by another. No single statement or obscure passage of one book can be allowed to set aside a doctrine which is clearly established by many passages. The obscure texts must be interpreted in the light of those which are plain and positive. "The faith," says Fairbairn, "according to which the sense of particular passages is determined, must be that which rests upon the broad import of some of the most explicit announcements of Scripture, about the meaning of which there can be, with unbiassed minds, no reasonable doubt. And in so far as we must decide between one passage and another, those passages should always be allowed greatest weight in fixing the general principles of the faith in which the subjects belonging to it are not incidentally noticed merely, but formally treated and discussed; for, in such cases, we can have no doubt that the point on which we seek for an authoritative deliverance was distinctly in the eye of the writer."[2]

[1] In Rom. xii, 6, the apostle is speaking of the gifts, *χαρίσματα*, the spiritual qualifications and aptitudes for Christian activity and usefulness in the Church, "gifts differing according to the grace given" to each individual. Of these varying gifts he specifies several examples, one of which is that of prophesying. Let the one thus gifted, he says, exercise his gift, *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*, *according to the proportion of the faith*, that is, the faith which he individually possesses. This proportion or analogy (*ἀναλογία*) of one's individual faith is not an external rule or doctrinal standard, the *regula fidei* (as Philippi, Hodge, and others hold), but the measure of faith with which each is endowed. "They are not to depart from the proportional measure which their faith has, neither wishing to exceed it, nor falling short of it, but are to guide themselves by it, and are therefore so to announce and interpret the received revelation, as the peculiar position in respect of faith bestowed on them, according to the strength, fervour, clearness, and other qualities of that faith, suggests—so that the character and mode of their speaking is conformed to the rules and limits, which are implied in the proportion of their individual degree of faith. In the contrary case they fall, in respect of contents and of form, into a mode of prophetic utterance, either excessive and overstrained, or, on the other hand, insufficient and defective, not corresponding to the level of their faith. The same revelation may, in fact—according to the difference in the proportion of faith with which it, objectively given, subjectively connects itself—be very differently expressed and delivered."—Meyer, in loco.

[2] Hermeneutical Manual, p. 128.

Two degrees of the analogy of faith.

We may distinguish two degrees of the analogy of faith. The first and highest is positive, in which the doctrine or revelation is so plainly and positively stated, and supported by so many distinct passages, that there can be no doubt of its meaning and value. Thus the Scriptures teach positively that all men are sinners; that God has provided redemption for all; that God is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, holy, righteous, and merciful; that he requires in those who seek his grace, repentance, faith, humility, love, and obedience; that he purposes to save and glorify those who love and serve him, and to punish those who disobey and hate him. These and many similar great truths are so positively and repeatedly set forth in the Holy Scriptures that no one who reads with care can fail to apprehend them.

Positive.

General.

The next degree is appropriately called the general analogy of faith. It rests not like the first upon explicit declarations, but upon the obvious scope and import of the Scripture teachings taken as a whole. Thus, for example, the subject of human slavery is referred to in various ways, both in the Old Testament and in the New. Some passages have been construed as sanctioning the practice, others as opposing and condemning it. A valid conclusion as to the general import of Scripture on this subject can be reached only by a broad and thorough investigation of all that bears upon it in the revelation of God. The Mosaic legislation, which expressly permits the buying of slaves from foreigners (Lev. xxv, 44, 45), makes the stealing and selling of a Hebrew a capital crime (Exod. xxi, 16; Deut. xxiv, 7). A leading feature of the Mosaic system was to distinguish sharply between the Israelite and the foreigner, always to the prejudice of the latter. This fact must be kept in mind in discussing any subject of Mosaic ethics. No Hebrew could, without his own consent, be retained in slavery more than six years (Exod. xxi, 2), and the year of jubilee might terminate the bondage sooner (Lev. xxv, 40, 54). Paul counsels the Christian slaves to be obedient to their masters (Eph. vi, 5; Col. iii, 22; 1 Tim. vi, 1, 2), but he sends back the fugitive, Onesimus, to his master, "no longer a slave, but more than a slave, a brother beloved" (Philem. 16). He proclaims, moreover, that under the Gospel "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is no male and female" (Gal. iii, 28). The putting on of Christ by being baptized into Christ (ver. 27) causes all distinctions of nation (comp. Rom. x, 12), condition, and even of sex, to be wholly lost sight of and forgotten. When to these and other similar teachings we add the consideration that the

Old Testament commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," dropped somewhat incidentally in the Mosaic legislation (Lev. xix, 18), is called by James "the royal law" (James ii, 8), and is announced by the Lord as a fundamental pillar of the divine revelation (Matt. xxii, 39; Mark xii, 31; Luke x, 27), we can scarcely doubt that the holding of any fellow being in bondage against his will is essentially contrary to the highest ethics. The general analogy of faith is thus made apparent by a broad and careful collation of all that the Scripture says on any given subject.[1]

Limitations and uses of the analogy of faith.

It is evident that no doctrine which rests upon a single passage of Scripture can belong to fundamental doctrines recognised in the analogy of faith. But it must not be inferred from this that no specific statement of Scripture is authoritative unless it has support in other passages. Nor can we set aside any legitimate inference from a statement of Scripture on the ground that such inference is unsupported by other parallel statements. Unless it be clearly contradicted or excluded by the analogy of faith, or by some other equally explicit statement, one positive declaration of God's word is sufficient to establish either a fact or a doctrine. Hence the analogy of faith as a principle of interpretation is necessarily limited in its application. It is useful in bringing out the relative importance and prominence of different doctrines, and guarding against a one-sided exposition of the sacred oracles. It exhibits the inner unity and harmony of the entire divine revelation. It magnifies the importance of consistency in interpretation. But it cannot govern the interpreter in the exposition of those parts of the Scriptures which are without real parallel, and which stand unopposed by other parts. For it may justly be inferred from the progress of doctrine in the Bible that here and there single revelations of divine truth may have been given in passages where the context furnished no occasion for further development or elaboration.

[1] Celérier (Manuel d'Hermeneutique, pp. 194–196) specifies two inferior degrees of analogy which he defines as *deduced* and *imposed;* but he very properly observes that they are unworthy of the name of analogy of faith; for the one rests upon the logical process by which it is attempted to prove a doctrine, the other upon an assumed authority supposed to inhere in the consensus of the creeds of Christendom. The consensus or analogy of Christian creeds is not without its value, but to use it as a method of interpreting Scripture is to substitute authority in the place of rational principles and rules of hermeneutics. What is believed everywhere, always, and by all (Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est), is, doubtless, worthy of serious consideration, but cannot be admitted as a means of unfolding the sense of any particular portions of the Bible.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL USE OF SCRIPTURE.

Paul's statement of the uses of Scripture.

Paul, the apostle, declares that all Scripture which is divinely inspired is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. iii, 16). These various uses of the holy records may be distinguished as doctrinal and practical. The Christian teacher appeals to them as authoritative utterances of divine truth, and unfolds their lessons as theoretical and doctrinal statements of what their divine author would have men believe. Our fifth Article of Religion (the sixth of the Church of England) says: "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." The inspired word, moreover, serves a most important practical purpose by furnishing conviction and reproof (ἔλεγχον, or ἐλεγμόν) for the sinful, correction (ἐπανόρθωσιν) for the fallen and erring, and instruction or disciplinary training (παιδείαν) for all who would become sanctified by the truth (comp. John xvii, 17) and perfected in the ways of righteousness.

Roman doctrine of interpretation by Church authority.

The Roman Church, as is well known, denies the right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and condemns the exercise of that right as the source of all heresy and schism. The third article of the creed of Pope Pius IV., which is one of the most authoritative expressions of Roman faith, reads as follows: "I admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother Church has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers."[1] The Romanist, therefore, finds in the Church and tradition an authority superior to the inspired Scripture. But when we find that the fathers notoriously disagree in the exposition of important passages, that popes have contradicted one another, and have condemned and annulled the acts of their predecessors,

[1] Comp. Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, pp. 96–99; vol. ii, p. 207. New York, 1877.

and that even great councils, like those of Nice (325), Laodicea (360), Constantinople (754), and Trent (1545) have enacted decrees utterly inconsistent with each other,[1] we may safely reject the pretensions of the Romanists, and pronounce them absurd and preposterous.

The Protestant, on the other hand, maintains the right of exercising his own reason and judgment in the study of the Scriptures. But he humbly acknowledges the fallibility of all men, not excepting any of the popes of Rome. He observes that there are portions of the Bible which are difficult to explain; he also observes that no Roman pontiff, whatever his claim of infallibility, has ever made them clear. He is convinced, furthermore, that there are many passages of holy writ on which good and wise men may agree to differ, and some of which no one may be able to interpret. By far the greater portion of the Old and New Testaments is so clear in general import that there is no room for controversy, and those parts which are obscure contain no fundamental truth or doctrine which is not elsewhere set forth in clearer form. Protestants, accordingly, hold it to be not only a right but a duty of all Christians to search the Scriptures, that they may know for themselves the will and commandments of God.[2]

The Protestant principle of using one's own reason.

But while the Holy Scriptures contain all essential revelation of divine truth, "so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith," it is of fundamental importance that all formal statements of biblical doctrine, and the exposition, elaboration, or defence of the same, be made in accordance with correct hermeneutical principles. The systematic expounder of Scripture doctrine is expected to set forth, in clear outline and well-defined terms, such teachings as have certain warrant in the word of God. He must not import into the text of Scripture the ideas of later times, or build upon any words or passages a dogma which they do not legitimately teach. The apologetic and dogmatic methods of interpretation which proceed from the standpoint of a formulated creed, and appeal to all words and sentiments scattered here and there in the

Statement and defence of doctrine to conform to correct Hermeneutics.

[1] See the proof of these statements in Elliott, Delineation of Roman Catholicism, vol i, pp. 144–147. New York, 1841.

[2] "If a position is demonstrably scriptural," says Dorner, "according to the evangelical doctrine of the Church, it has an essentially ecclesiastical character; it has citizenship and a claim to regard even though it do not enjoy a formal validity; and a position which is demonstrably opposed to Scripture has similarly no claim to acceptance though it be ecclesiastical."—System of Christian Doctrine, vol. i, p. 176. Edinb., 1880.

Scriptures, which may by any possibility lend support to a foregone conclusion, have been condemned already (see above, pp. 68, 69). By such methods many false notions have been urged upon men as matters of faith. But no man has a right to foist into his expositions of Scripture his own dogmatic conceptions, or those of others, and then insist that these are an essential part of divine revelation. Only that which is clearly read therein, or legitimately proved thereby, can be properly held as scriptural doctrine.[1]

Biblical and historical theology to be distinguished.

We should, however, clearly discriminate between biblical theology, and the historical and systematic development of Christian doctrine. Many fundamental truths are set forth in fragmentary forms, or by implication, in the Scriptures; but in the subsequent life and thought of the Church, they have been brought out by thorough elaboration, and the formulated statements of individuals and ecclesiastical councils.[2] All the great creeds and confessions of Christendom assume to be in harmony with the written word of God, and manifestly have great historical value; but they contain not a few statements of doctrine which a legitimate interpretation of the Scripture proof-texts appealed to does not authorize. A fundamental principle of Protestantism is that the Scriptures only are the true sources of doctrine. A creed has no authority further than it clearly rests upon what God has spoken by his inspired prophets and apostles. All true Christian doctrine is contained in substance in the canonical Scriptures.[3] But the elaborate study and exposition of subsequent ages

[1] "In the domain of Christian doctrine," says Van Oosterzee, "the Scripture is rightly made use of, when it is duly tested, interpreted according to precise rules, employed in explaining, purifying, and developing Church confessions, and is consulted as a guide in individual Christian philosophic investigation of truth."—Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, pp. 220, 221. New York, 1874.

[2] Thus Martensen: "As the archetypal work of the Spirit of Inspiration, the Scriptures include within themselves a world of germs for a continuous development. While every dogmatic system grows old, the Bible remains eternally young, because it does not give us a systematic presentation of truth, but truth in its fulness, involving the possibility of a variety of systems."—Christian Dogmatics, p. 52. Edinb., 1866.

[3] "The history of doctrines," says Hagenbach, "presupposes biblical theology as its basis; just as the general history of the Church presupposes the life of Jesus and the apostolic age."—Text-Book of the History of Doctrines, p. 16. Eng. trans., revised by H. B. Smith, New York, 1861. He observes further (p. 44): "With the incarnation of the Redeemer, and the introduction of Christianity into the world, the materials of the history of doctrines are already fully given in the germ. The object of all further doctrinal statements and definitions is, in the positive point of view, to unfold this germ; in the negative, to guard it against all foreign additions and influences." Similarly Schaff: "In the Protestant system, the authority of symbols, as of all human compositions, is relative and limited. It is not co-ordinate with, but always subordinate

may be presumed to have put some things in clearer light, and the judgments expressed by venerable councils are entitled to great respect and deference.

Most of the great controversies on Christian doctrine have grown out of attempts to define what is left in the Scriptures undefined. The mysteries of the nature of God, the person and work of Jesus Christ, sacrificial atonement in its relations to divine justice, man's depraved nature and the relative possibilities of the human soul with and without the light of the Gospel, the method of regeneration, and the degrees of possible Christian attainment, the resurrection of the dead, and the mode of immortality and eternal judgment—these and kindred subjects are of a nature to invite speculation and vain theorizing, and it was most natural that everything in the Scripture bearing on such points should have been pressed into service. On such mysterious themes it is quite easy for men to become "wise above what is written," and in the historical development of the blended life, thought, and activities of the Church, some things came to be generally accepted as essential Christian doctrine which in fact are without sufficient warrant in the Scriptures.

Human tendency to be wise above what is written.

Inasmuch, then, as the Scriptures are the sole source of revealed doctrine, and were given for the purpose of making known to men the saving truth of God, it is of the utmost importance that we study, by sound hermeneutical methods, to ascertain from them the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We may best illustrate our meaning by taking several leading doctrines of the Christian faith, and indicating the unsound and untenable methods by which their advocates have sometimes defended them.

True and false methods to ascertain Scripture doctrines.

Nothing is more fundamental in any system of religion than the doctrine of God, and the catholic faith of the early Christian Church, as formulated in the Athanasian Creed, is this:

The catholic doctrine of God.

That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the

to, the Bible, as the only infallible rule of the Christian faith and practice. The value of creeds depends upon the measure of their agreement with the Scriptures. In the best case a human creed is only an approximate and relatively correct exposition of revealed truth, and may be improved by the progressive knowledge of the Church, while the Bible remains perfect and infallible."—The Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, p. 7.

Son, and such is the Holy Spirit: The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated; the Father incomprehensible (*immensus*), the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal; as also there are not three uncreated, nor three incomprehensibles, but One uncreated, and One incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Spirit Almighty; and yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

Here is a very succinct and explicit statement of doctrine, and its definitions, so far as quoted above, have obtained all but universal acceptance among evangelical believers. Though commonly ascribed to Athanasius, this symbol of faith, like the Apostles' Creed, is of unknown authorship, and furnishes one of the most remarkable examples of the extraordinary influence which some works of that kind have exerted.

Doctrinal symbols not unscriptural.

But are the definitions and sharp distinctions set forth in this creed according to the Scriptures? May we read them therein, or prove them thereby? No one pretends that the several clauses, or any of the formal definitions, are taken from the Bible. All such systematic presentations of dogma are foreign to the style of the Scriptures; but this fact is no valid reason for rejecting them, or supposing them to be unscriptural. "A creed," says Schaff, "ought to use language different from that of the Bible. A string of Scripture passages would be no creed at all, as little as it would be a prayer or a hymn. A creed is, as it were, a doctrinal poem written under the inspiration of divine truth. This may be said at least of the œcumenical creeds."[1] Hence a well-constructed creed is supposed to express the sum total of what the Scriptures teach on a given subject, but not necessarily in the language or terms of the sacred writers. Nor are its statements to be supposed to depend on any one or two particular texts or passages of the Bible. It is quite possible that the general judgment of men may legitimately accept as a positive doctrine of Scripture what no one text or passage, taken by itself alone, would be sufficient to authorize. The catholic doctrine of the Trinity is very much of this character. A calm and dispassionate review of ages of controversy over this important dogma will show that, on the one hand, the advocates of the catholic faith have made an unscientific and inconclusive use of many Scripture texts, while, on the other hand, their opponents have been equally unfair in rejecting

[1] The Creeds of Christendom, vol. i, p. 7, foot note.

the logical and legitimate conclusion of a cumulative argument which rested on the evidence of many biblical statements, of which they themselves could furnish no sufficient or satisfactory explanation. The argument from each text may be nullified or largely set aside, when taken singly and alone; but a great number and variety of such evidences, taken as a whole, and exhibiting a manifest coherency, may not thus be set aside.

Thus, for example, the plural form of the name of God (אֱלֹהִים) in the Hebrew Scriptures has often been adduced as proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead. A similar application has been made of the threefold use of the divine name in the priestly blessing (Num. vi, 24–27), and the trisagion in Isa. vi, 3. Even the proverb, "A threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccles. iv, 12), has been quoted as a proof-text of the Trinity. Such a use of Scripture will not be likely to advance the interests of truth, or be profitable for doctrine. A repetition of the divine name three or more times is no evidence that the worshipper thereby intends a reference to so many personal distinctions in the divine nature. The plural form אֱלֹהִים may as well designate a multiplicity of divine potentialities in the deity as three personal distinctions, or it may be explained as the plural of majesty and excellency. Such peculiar forms of expression are susceptible of too many explanations to be used as valid proof texts of the Trinity.

Plural form of the name of God.

So, again, of the passage in Gen. xix, 24, often quoted in the Trinitarian controversies. "The name Jehovah," says Watson, "if it has not a plural form, has more than one personal application. 'Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.' We have here the visible Jehovah who had talked with Abraham raining the storm of vengeance from another Jehovah out of heaven, and who was, therefore, invisible. Thus we have two Jehovahs expressly mentioned, 'the Lord rained from the Lord,' and yet we have it most solemnly asserted in Deut. vi, 4, 'Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.'"[1] Much more natural and simple, however, is the explanation which recognises in this repetition of the name Jehovah a Hebraistic mode of statement. "It is," says Calvin, "an emphatic repetition." Browne remarks: "Aben Ezra, whom perhaps a majority of Christian commentators have followed in this, sees in these words a peculiar 'elegance or grace of language;' 'the Lord rained from the Lord' being a grander and more impressive mode of saying, 'the Lord rained from himself.'

Language of Gen. xix, 24.

[1] Theological Institutes, vol. i, p. 467.

It is a common idiom in Hebrew to repeat the noun instead of using a pronoun."[1]

Angel of Jehovah.

The theophanies of the Old Testament have also been adduced in maintaining the doctrine of the Trinity. But whatever else may be made of the argument, it furnishes no sound proof that the Godhead consists of a number of distinct persons. The Angel of Jehovah, so mysteriously identified with Jehovah himself (Gen. xvi, 7, 10, 13; xxii, 11, 12, 15, 16), and in whom is the name of Jehovah (Exod. xxiii, 21), is not necessarily a manifestation of one person of the Godhead rather than another, but may be explained as a singular manifestation of Jehovah himself without any idea of personal distinctions in his nature or essence. But while this is admitted on the one hand, it ought not to be denied, on the other, that in the light of New Testament revelations of Christ, as the revealed wisdom and power of God, we may discern in the Old Testament Angel of Jehovah a manifestation of him who in the fulness of time took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men (Phil. ii, 7). It was, moreover, a part of the theology of the ancient synagogue that this angel was the Shekinah, or manifested power and mediation of God in the world.

New Testament doctrine of God.

A similar disposition may be made of many other proofs of the Trinity which have been cited from the Old Testament, but passing into the New Testament we cannot but be impressed with the language used in John i, 18: "No one has ever seen God; God only begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, he made him known."[2] This remarkable statement leads one to ask, Who is this only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, and reveals God, or makes him known? In the first verse of the same chapter he is called the Word (*ὁ λόγος*), and is said to have been "with the God" (*πρὸς τὸν θεόν*), and the further statement

[1] Speaker's Commentary, in loco.

[2] The more familiar and almost equally well-supported reading, "only begotten Son," conveys essentially the same mysterious and wonderful suggestion. "Both readings," says Hort, "intrinsically are free from objection. The text (God only begotten), though startling at first, simply combines in a single phrase the two attributes of the Logos marked before (*θεός*, ver. 1, *μονογενής*, ver. 14). Its sense is 'One who was both *θεός* and *μονογενής*.' The substitution of the familiar phrase *ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός* for the unique *μονογενὴς θεός* would be obvious, and *μονογενής*, by its own primary meaning, directly suggested *υἱός*. The converse substitution is inexplicable by any ordinary motive likely to affect transcribers. There is no evidence that the reading had any controversial interest in ancient times. And the absence of the article from the more important documents is fatal to the idea that $\overline{\Theta C}$ was an accidental substitution for $\overline{Y C}$."—Appendix to Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament, p. 74.

is made that he "was God." Creation is ascribed to him (ver. 3), and he is declared to be the life and the light of men (ver. 4). This Word, it is added in verse 14, "became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory—glory as of an only begotten from a Father full of grace and truth." It is quite possible that polemic writers may make too much of these wonderful words. What it is to *be with the God*, and also to *be God*, may well be treated as a mystery too deep for the human mind to solve. The Word which became flesh, according to John i, 14, may fairly be understood to be identical with him who, according to Paul in 1 Tim. iii, 16, embodies "the mystery of godliness; he who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory." This can be no other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of man. When, now, we observe that the apostles were commissioned to "go forth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. xxviii, 19;) that Paul invokes "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit," to be with all the brethren of the Corinthian church (2 Cor. xiii, 13); and that John invokes grace and peace upon the seven churches of Asia "from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the land" (Rev. i, 4, 5), we may with good reason conclude that God, as revealed in the New Testament, consists of Father, Son, and Spirit existing in some mysterious and incomprehensible unity of nature. From such a basis the exegete may go on to examine all those texts which indicate in any way the person, nature, and character of Christ: his pre-existence, his divine names and titles, his holy attributes and perfections, his power on earth to forgive sins, and other prerogatives and works ascribed to him, and the command for all men and angels to worship him. The fact that "God is Spirit" (John iv, 24) allows us readily to conceive that the Holy Spirit and God himself are one in substance, and the manner in which our Lord speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter whom he will send (John xv, 26; xvi, 7), and whom the Father will send in his name (xiv, 26), points by every fair construction to a distinction between the Father and the Holy Spirit. Putting all these together we find so many far-reaching and profoundly suggestive declarations concerning these divine persons, that we cannot logically avoid the conclusion enunciated in the creed, that "the Father

Mysterious distinctions in the divine nature.

is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God."

Abstain from unauthorized assertions and disputed readings.

But in the systematic elaboration of this argument the theologian should carefully abstain from unauthorized assertions. A theme so full of mystery and of majesty as the nature of God, and his personal revelations in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, admits of no dogmatic tone. Assertions like the following from Sherlock are no advantage to the interests of truth: "To say they are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense. . . . The distinction of persons cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by the distinction between three men; for Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are as really distinct persons as Peter, James, and John."[1] This is being wise above what is written, and is as harmful to valid argument as citing and urging texts where the reading and punctuation are doubtful, or where (as in the case of 1 John v, 7) the evidence of interpolation is overwhelming. No man should assume to *explain* the mysteries of Deity.

Vicarious Atonement.

The doctrine of atonement in Christ is thus set forth in the Canons of the Synod of Dort: "The death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sin; is of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world."[2] The Westminster Confession of Faith expresses it thus: "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of the Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him."[3] It is probable that to many evangelical Christians neither of these forms of statement is satisfactory, while yet, at the same time, they would not reject them as unscriptural. They contain several phrases which have been so mixed with dogmatic controversy that many would for that reason decline to use them, and prefer the simple but comprehensive statement of the Gospel: "God so loved the world that he gave the Son, the only begotten, that every one who believes in him should not

[1] Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, pp. 66, 105. London, 1690. Equally dogmatic, on the other hand, is the declaration of Norton concerning the doctrines of the Trinity and the twofold nature of Christ: "There is not a passage to be found in the Scriptures which can be imagined to affirm either of those doctrines that have been represented as being at the very foundation of Christianity."—Statement of Reasons for not believing the Doctrines of Trinitarians concerning the Nature of God and the Person of Christ, p. 63. Third edition, Boston, 1856.

[2] See Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii, p. 586. [3] Ibid., p. 621.

perish, but have life eternal" (John iii, 16). This Scripture does not say that the Son was given as "a sacrifice and satisfaction for sin," or that the procedure was a "perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself" in order to "fully satisfy the justice of the Father," and "purchase reconciliation for all those whom the Father hath given unto him." But, as Alford well says: "These words, whether spoken in Hebrew or in Greek, seem to carry a reference to the offering of Isaac; and Nicodemus in that case would at once be reminded by them of the love there required, the substitution there made, and the prophecy there uttered to Abraham (Gen. xxii, 18) to which 'every one who believes' so nearly corresponds."[1]

When we proceed to compare with this Scripture its obvious parallels (as Rom. iii, 24–26; v, 6–10; Eph. i, 7; 1 Peter i, 18, 19; iii, 18; 1 John iv, 9), and bring forward in illustration of them the Old Testament idea of sacrifice, and the symbolism of blood (see above, pp. 268, 269), we may construct a systematic exhibition of the doctrine of atonement which no faithful interpreter of the Scriptures can fairly gainsay or resist. It is not a special dogmatic exposition of any single text, or a peculiar stress laid upon isolated words or phrases by which a scriptural doctrine is best set forth, but rather by accumulation of a number and variety of passages bearing on the subject, the meaning and relevancy of each of which are obvious.

The awful doctrine of eternal punishment has been greatly confused by mixing with it many notions which are destitute of valid scriptural proof. The refinements of torture, delineated in the appalling pictures of Dante's Inferno, should not be taken as guides to help us in understanding the words of Jesus, even though we be told that the Gehenna, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix, 48), and "the outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxv, 30), authorize such horrible portraitures of the final doom of the wicked. The fearful representations of divine judgment and penalty set forth in Scripture need not be interpreted literally in order to enforce the doctrine of the hopeless perdition of the incorrigible sinner, and the exegete, who assumes in his discussion that the literal import of such texts must be held, weakens his own argument. Far more convincing and overwhelming is that mode of teaching which makes no special plea over the etymology or usage of some disputed word (even though it be *αἰώνιος*), but rather holds up to view the uniform and awful indications of hopeless ruin and utter exclusion from the glory of God which the

Eternal Punishment.

[1] Greek Testament, in loco.

Scriptures continually furnish as a certain fearful expectation of the ungodly. A momentous and eternal truth may be set forth in figure as well as in literal statement, and the force of the Scripture doctrine of the final doom of the wicked lies not more in the terrible suggestions of positive punishment, tribulation, and anguish, than in the absence of any hope of pardon and salvation in the future. Vain is the appeal to such a text as Matt. xii, 32: "Whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in that which is to come." Here, say some, is an implication that for other sins and blasphemies there may be forgiveness in the age or world to come. But to this it may at once be answered that such an implication is at best a most uncertain hope, while on the contrary the assertion is most positive that the blasphemy against the Spirit shall never be forgiven. Endless perdition, therefore, awaits such blaspheming sinners, and will the opponents of eternal punishment assume that no one ever has committed, or will commit, the blasphemy here meant? In the parallel passage of Mark (iii, 29) we meet with that profound and fearfully suggestive statement, that "whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit has no forgiveness forever, but is guilty of (ἔνοχος, is held fast bound by) eternal sin." How futile and delusive, then, to build a hope on the suggestions of such a text, when, for aught the reasoner knows, every wilful sinner, who deliberately rejects the claims of the Gospel and dies impenitent, commits this blasphemy against the Spirit.

Utter absence of scriptural hope for the wicked.

Equally delusive would it be to build a hope of future pardon on what is written in 1 Peter iii, 18–20, and iv, 6. For if we allow the strictest literal construction, and believe that Christ went in spirit and preached to the spirits in prison, we have no intimation as to what he preached, or of the results of that preaching; and the entire statement is confined to those who were disobedient in the days of Noah. There is no intimation that he preached to any other spirits, or that any other such preaching ever took place before, or ever will take place hereafter. Furthermore, if we infer, from 1 Peter iv, 6, that the purpose of this preaching to the dead was that they might be rescued from their prison, and "live according to God in spirit," it is entirely uncertain whether any one of them accepted the offer, and were thus saved. If, however, it be urged that it is altogether presumable that such a preaching of the Gospel by Christ himself would not be without blessed results, and that such grace shown to one class of imprisoned spirits is a fair ground for presuming that like mercy may be extended to many others, if not to all, we have only

Preaching to the spirits in prison.

to answer: All these are presumptions which have too much against them in other parts of Scripture to be made the ground of hope to any wilful sinner, or to allow our laying down any universal proposition touching the unknown future.[1]

Doctrine not confined to any one class or portion of the Scriptures.

We repudiate the notion, often asserted by some, that we may not use the figurative portions of Scripture for the purpose of establishing or maintaining a doctrine. Figures of speech, parables, allegories, types, and symbols are divinely chosen forms by which God has communicated a large part of his written word to men, and these peculiar methods of communicating thought may teach doctrine as well as any thing else (comp. pp. 159, 160). Our Lord has seen fit to set forth his truth in manifold forms, and it is our duty to recognise that truth whether it appear in metaphor, parable, or symbol. Is there no doctrine taught in such metaphors as (Psa. li, 7) "Purify me with hyssop," or (1 Cor. v, 7) "Christ, our passover, was sacrificed"? Can the doctrine of a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. v, 17; Gal. vi, 15), and the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus iii, 5), be more clearly or forcibly set forth than by the figure of the new birth (regeneration) as used by Jesus (John iii, 3–8)? Does the allegory of the vine and its branches (John xv, 1–6) teach no doctrine? Was there no doctrine taught by the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness, or in the symbolism of blood, or in the pattern and service of the tabernacle? And as to teaching by parables, we may well observe with Trench: "To create a powerful impression language must be recalled, minted, and issued anew, cast into novel forms, as was done by him of whom it is said that without a parable (*παραβολή*, in its widest sense) spake he nothing to his hearers; that is, he gave no doctrine in the abstract form, no skeletons of truth, but all clothed, as it were, with flesh and blood. He acted himself as he declared to his disciples they must act if they would be scribes instructed unto the kingdom, and able to instruct others (Matt. xiii, 52); he brought forth out of his treasure things new and old; by the help of the old he made intelligible the new; by the aid of the familiar he introduced them to that which was strange; from the known he passed more easily to the unknown. And in his own

[1] It scarcely accords with the true spirit of calm theological inquiry to obtrude dogmatical assertions as to any possibilities of grace beyond this life. What may be the future development and opportunities of those who die in infancy, or what may be allowed in another state of being to such as may be supposed never to have had suitable opportunities of accepting salvation in this life, are questions which God alone can answer, and the presumption of those who, in the absence of specific revelation, dogmatize on such themes, is only equalled by the folly of those who would rest their hopes of the future on such unknown and uncertain possibilities.

manner of teaching, and in his instruction to his apostles, he has given us the secret of all effectual teaching—of all speaking which shall leave behind it, as was said of one man's eloquence, stings in the minds and memories of the hearers." [1]

Eschatology mostly taught in figurative language.

But when we come to study the doctrines of biblical eschatology, how little do we find that is not set forth in figure or in symbol? Perhaps the notable confusion of modern teaching on the subjects of the parousia, resurrection, and judgment is largely due to a notion that these doctrines must needs have been revealed in literal form. The doctrine of divine judgment with its eternal issues is none the less positive and sure because set forth in the highly wrought and vivid picture of Matt. xxv, 31–46, or the vision of Rev. xx, 11, 12. "The judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. xiv, 10; 2 Cor. v, 10) is a metaphorical expression, based on familiar forms of dispensing justice in human tribunals (comp. Matt. xxvii, 19; Acts xii, 21; xviii, 12, 16; xxv, 6, 10, 17), and the expositor who insists that we must understand the eternal judgment of Christ only *as executed after the forms of human courts*, only damages the cause of truth.

The resurrection of the body.

How, also, has the doctrine of the resurrection become involved in doubt and confusion by overwise attempts to tell *how* the dead are raised up, and *with what body* they come forth! That the body is raised is the manifest scriptural teaching. Christ's body was raised, and his resurrection is the type, representative, and pledge that all will be raised (1 Cor. xv, 1–22). Many saints who had fallen asleep arose with him, and it is expressly written that their bodies (*σώματα*) were raised (Matt. xxvii, 52). Paul's doctrine clearly is that "he who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead, shall also make alive your mortal bodies" (Rom. viii, 11; comp. Phil. iii, 21). He does not entertain the question, on which so many modern divines have wasted speculation, as, wherein consists identity of body, and may not the dust of different bodies become mixed, and will all the particles of matter be restored? But he does employ suggestive illustrations, and by the figure of the grain of wheat shows that the body which is sown is "not the body that shall be" (1 Cor. xv, 37). He calls attention to the varieties of flesh (*σάρξ*), as of men, beasts, birds, and fishes, and to the great difference between the glory of heavenly and earthly bodies, and then says that the human body is sown in corruption, dishonour, and weakness, but raised up in incorruption, glory, and power (verses 39–45). "It is sown a natural (*ψυχικόν*) body; it is raised a spiritual body." The interests of divine truth

[1] Notes on the Parables, p. 27.

have not been helped by dogmatic essays to go beyond the apostle in the explanation or illustration of this mystery.

In the systematic presentation, therefore, of any scriptural doctrine, we are always to make a discriminating use of sound hermeneutical principles. We must not study them in the light of modern systems of divinity, but should aim rather to place ourselves in the position of the sacred writers, and study to obtain the impression their words would naturally have made upon the minds of the first readers.[1] The question should be, not what does the Church say, or what do the ancient fathers and the great councils and the œcumenical creeds say, but what do the Scriptures legitimately teach? Still less should we allow ourselves to be influenced by any presumptions of what the Scriptures *ought* to teach. It is not uncommon for writers and preachers to open a discussion with the remark that in a written revelation like the Bible we might naturally expect to find such or such things. All such presumptions are uncalled for and prejudicial. The assumption that the first chapter of Genesis describes a universal cosmogony, and that the Book of Revelation details all human history, or that of the Church, to the end of time, has been the fruitful source of a vast amount of false exegesis.

Freedom from prepossessions and presumptions.

The teacher of Scripture doctrine should not cite his proof-texts *ad libitum*, or at random, as if any word or sentiment in harmony with his purpose, if only found in the Scriptures, must needs be pertinent. The character of the whole book or epistle, and the context, scope, and plan are often necessary to be taken into consideration before the real bearings of a given text can be clearly apprehended. That doctrine only is theologically sound which rests upon a strict grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture, and while all divinely inspired Scripture is profitable for doctrine and discipline in righteousness, its inspiration does not require or allow us to interpret it on any

Texts not to be cited *ad libitum*.

[1] In order to be able to explain any one's words to others, one must understand them himself, otherwise he cannot render them intelligible to others. One understands another's words when by means of them he thinks as did the speaker or writer, and as he wished one should think. Thus one explains another's words rightly to others when he enables them to think precisely what the speaker or writer thought or wished to be thought. In the interpretation of any writing, it has not to be inquired what the readers for whom it was destined thought, but what, according to the intention of the writer, they should have thought in reading it. The object of the interpretation is the thoughts of the writer or speaker, in as far as he has expressed them in words for others. This does not take away that it often is of great importance to the interpretation of one or more sayings to inquire how the hearers understood them.—Doedes, Manual of Hermeneutics, pp. 2, 3. Edinb., 1867.

other principles than those which are applicable to uninspired writings. The interpreter is always bound to consider how the subject lay in the mind of the author, and to point out the exact ideas and sentiments intended. It is not for him to show how many meanings the words may possibly bear, nor even how the first readers understood them. The real meaning intended by the author, and that only, is to be set forth.

New Testament doctrine not clear without the help of the Old.

There is much reason for believing that the habit, quite general since the time of Ernesti, of treating the hermeneutics of the New Testament separately from the Old, has occasioned the misunderstanding of some important doctrines of Holy Writ. The language and style in which certain New Testament teachings are expressed are so manifestly modelled after Old Testament forms of statement, that they cannot be properly explained without a minute and thorough apprehension of the import of the older Scriptures.[1] We cannot, therefore, accept without qualification the following words of Van Oosterzee: "We have no right for a use of these (O. T.) Scriptures, in which we do not take heed to their peculiar character, as distinguished from those of the New Testament. The Old Testament revelation must always be regarded first in relation to Israel, and has only value for our dogmatics in so far as it is confirmed by the gospel of the New. The letter of the Old Testament must thus be tested by the spirit of the New, and whatever therein stands in opposition

[1] Take for illustration the following passage from one of our most recent and able works on theology. Speaking of the lawless one mentioned in 2 Thess. ii, 8, Pope says: "Prophetical theology has its many hypotheses for the explanation of the symbols of Daniel and the Apocalypse, and the plain words of St. Paul. But there has not yet been found on earth the power or the being to whom all St. Paul's terms are applicable."—Compendium of Chr. Theology, vol. iii. p. 394. The critical student of Daniel's description of the little horn (Dan. vii, 8, 25; viii, 9–12, 23–25; comp. xi, 36–38), will note that the words of Paul in 2 Thess. ii, 3–10, are no plainer than those of Daniel, from whom they are so evidently copied. And if Daniel's symbols and language were fulfilled, as most of the leading Old Testament exegetes admit, in the lawless Antiochus Epiphanes, how can it be said, in view of the equally lawless and blasphemous Nero, that "there has not yet been found on earth the power or the being to whom all St. Paul's terms are applicable?" We might fill volumes with extracts showing how exegetes and writers on New Testament doctrine assume as a principle not to be questioned that such highly wrought language as Matt. xxiv, 29–31; 1 Thess. iv, 16; and 2 Pet. iii, 10, 12, taken almost *verbatim* from Old Testament prophecies of judgment on nations and kingdoms which long ago perished, must be literally understood. Too little study of Old Testament ideas of judgment, and apocalyptic language and style, would seem to be the main reason for this one sided exegesis. It will require more than assertion to convince thoughtful men that the figurative language of Isaiah and Daniel, admitted on all hands to be such in those ancient prophets, is to be literally interpreted when used by Jesus or Paul.

o the New has as little binding force for our belief as for our life. A dogma which can be supported only by an appeal to the Old Testament can only maintain its place in Christian dogmatics if it manifestly does not conflict with the letter and spirit of the New, nd also stands in close connexion with other propositions derived rom the New Testament."[1]

One and the same spirit in both Testaments.

Every distinct portion of Scripture, whether in the Old or the New Testament, must, indeed, be interpreted in harmony with its own peculiar character, and the historical standpoint of each writer must be duly considered. The Old Testament cannot be truly apprehended without always egarding its relation to Israel, to whom it was first intrusted Rom. iii, 2). And while it is true that "the letter of the Old Testament must be tested by the spirit of the New," it is equally rue that, to understand the spirit and import of the New Testament, 'e are often dependent on both the letter and spirit of the Old. It ıay be that no important doctrine of the Old Testament is without onfirmation in the Christian Scriptures, but it is also to be remembered that every important doctrine of the New Testament may be ound in germ in the Old, and the New Testament writers were all, ithout exception, Jews or Jewish proselytes, and made use of the ewish Scriptures as oracles of God.

Confusion of Hebrew and Aryan modes of thought.

A correct view of this whole subject is taken when we regard ıe Hebrew people as of old divinely chosen to hold nd teach the principles of true religion. It was not ıeirs to develop science, philosophy, and art. Other ıces attended more to these. It was not until the mystery of God, nclosed in the Israelitish worship as the bud, blossomed out in the ospel, and was given to the Aryan world, that a systematic theolgy began to be developed. These Gentile peoples had long been ying, by reason and from nature, to solve the mysterious problems the universe, and when the Gospel revelation came to them, it as eagerly seized by many as a clue to the intricate and perplexg secrets of God and the world. But a failure to apprehend the tter and spirit of the Hebrew records of faith led also to a failure understand some of the doctrines of the Gospel, so that, from the ostolic age until now, there has been a conflict of Gnostic and bionitish tendencies in Christian thought. It is only as a correct ientific method enables us to distinguish between the true and the lse in each of these tendencies that we shall perceive that the velations of both Testaments are essentially one and inseparable. here can be, therefore, no complete and thorough hermeneutics of

[1] Christian Dogmatics, vol. i, p. 18. New York, 1874.

New Testament doctrine without a clear insight into the letter and spirit of the Old.

In the practical and homiletical use of the Scriptures we are also to seek first the true grammatico-historical sense. The life of godliness is nourished by the edifying, comforting, and assuring lessons of divine revelation. They serve also, as we have seen, for reproof and correction. But in this more subjective and practical use of the Bible, words and thoughts may have a wider and more general application than in strict exegesis. Commands and counsels which had their first and only direct reference to those of bygone generations may be equally useful for us. An entire chapter, like that of Rom. xvi, filled with personal salutations for godly men and women now utterly unknown, may furnish many most precious suggestions of brotherly love and holy Christian fellowship. The personal experiences of Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, and Paul exhibit lights and shades from which every devout reader may gather counsel and admonition. Pious feeling may find in such characters and experiences lessons of permanent worth even where a sound exegesis must disallow the typical character of the person or event. In short, every great event, every notable personage or character, whether good or evil, every account of patient suffering, every triumph of virtue, every example of faith and good works, may serve in some way for instruction in righteousness.[1]

Practical and Homiletical use of Scripture.

The promises of divine oversight and care, the hopes and pledges set before the holy men of old, and all exhortations to watchfulness and prayer, may have manifold practical applications to Christians of every age. The same may be said of all the ancient warnings and appeals to escape the coming wrath of God which had primary reference to impending judgments. The carelessness and disobedience of those who lived in the days of Noah are a lively admonition and warning to all men of

Promises, admonitions, and warnings.

[1] The Bible constantly presents general principles, absolute commandments, and living examples, but it never applies these principles to human actions as recorded upon its pages. This is left to the enlightened conscience and thoughtful judgment of the reader. It is God's will that we should meditate upon all Scripture, and make ourselves the moral application. The Bible records the pious obedience and simple and singular faith of Noah, but makes no comment upon it; and it relates the story of his shame when overcome by his appetite without a note of warning. Abraham is sometimes called the friend of God, and is styled in Scripture the father of them that believe. His marvellous simplicity of character, and unfaltering trust in God, are fully described in the sacred word, and without note of comment or excuse the stories of his deceit are also written out.—Pierce, The Word of God Opened, p. 77 New York, 1868.

every age who follow worldly things alone, and have no care about their eternal destiny. All the New Testament admonitions to watch and be in constant readiness for the coming of the Lord are capable of a most legitimate practical application to believers now, in reference to the uncertainty of the hour of death. To say, as many modern Chiliasts, that such an application of the admonitions to prepare for the parousia is a perversion of the Scripture teaching, is most futile. The coming of the Lord to a believer at death, in order to transport his redeemed spirit to paradise, is not, to be sure, the parousia which Jesus declared would take place within a generation from his time. But as departure from this life puts an end to probation, and "inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that—judgment" (Heb. ix, 27), every motive which should have led men to prepare and watch for the judgment of the flood, and every exhortation for the contemporaries of Jesus and Paul to watch and be ready for the parousia, serve ever to admonish and warn us and all generations to be prepared for that day and hour when we must pass to eternal judgment of weal or woe. How much more sensible and forcible is this practical exhortation, the point and propriety of which all men must feel, than the visionary appeals of those expositors who would have us believe that we are now, any day and hour, to expect what Jesus said should take place within his own generation!

Pre-millennialists and post-millennialists have fallen into noticeable confusion in attempts to make such commands as "Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh;" "Therefore, be ye also ready;" "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour" (Matt. xxiv, 42, 44; xxv, 13), consistent with two thousand years' delay. Brown, indeed, concedes (Christ's Second Coming, p. 20) that "the death of any individual is, to all practical purposes, the coming of Christ to that soul. It is his summons to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. It is to him the close of time, and the opening of an unchanging eternity, as truly as the second advent will be to mankind at large." "There is a perfect analogy," he adds, "between the two classes of events. . . . Still, it is in the way of analogy alone that texts expressive of the one can or ought to be applied to the other. It can never be warranted, and is often dangerous to make that the primary and proper *interpretation* of a passage which is but a secondary, though it may be a very legitimate, and even irresistible, *application* of it." All this is very correct, but Mr. Brown falls into the error of the Chiliasts themselves when he goes on to argue that all the New Testament admonitions and warnings which imply the nearness of

the parousia are consistent with centuries, and even millenniums, of delay. All those warnings and exhortations may be easily shown to have had their primary application and reference to the end of the pre-millennial age (æon), which took place at the fall of the temple and its cultus, and correct *interpretation* finds their primary and only direct reference to that event. But by way of manifest analogy, and in practical and homiletical use, they have a pertinent and impressive lesson to all generations of men. And it detracts from the force and usefulness of these texts to import into them an imaginary significance which they were never intended to bear.

Practical and homiletical use of Scripture to be based on correct interpretation.

In all our private study of the Scriptures for personal edification we do well to remember that the first and great thing is to lay hold of the real spirit and meaning of the sacred writer. There can be no true application, and no profitable taking to ourselves of any lessons of the Bible, unless we first clearly apprehend their original meaning and reference. To build a moral lesson upon an erroneous interpretation of the language of God's word is a reprehensible procedure. But he who clearly discerns the exact grammatico-historical sense of a passage, is the better qualified to give it any legitimate application which its language and context will allow.

Accordingly, in homiletical discourse, the public teacher is bound to base his applications of the truths and lessons of the divine word upon a correct apprehension of the primary signification of the language which he assumes to expound and enforce. To misinterpret the sacred writer is to discredit any application one may make of his words. But when, on the other hand, the preacher first shows, by a valid interpretation, that he thoroughly comprehends that which is written, his various allowable accommodations of the writer's words will have the greater force, in whatever practical applications he may give them.

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The second volume, revised by Ayre, is devoted to the Criticism and Interpretation of Scripture, and is a comprehensive and useful work.

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All these treatises display the skill of a master, and emphasize the necessity of strict grammatico-historical interpretation.

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——— Institutio brevior ad liberalem eruditionem theologicam. Halle, 1765. 8vo. See MEYER, LEWIS.

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All Semler's works are rich in suggestion, but replete with rationalistic errors, and have exerted a pernicious influence on German exegesis.

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